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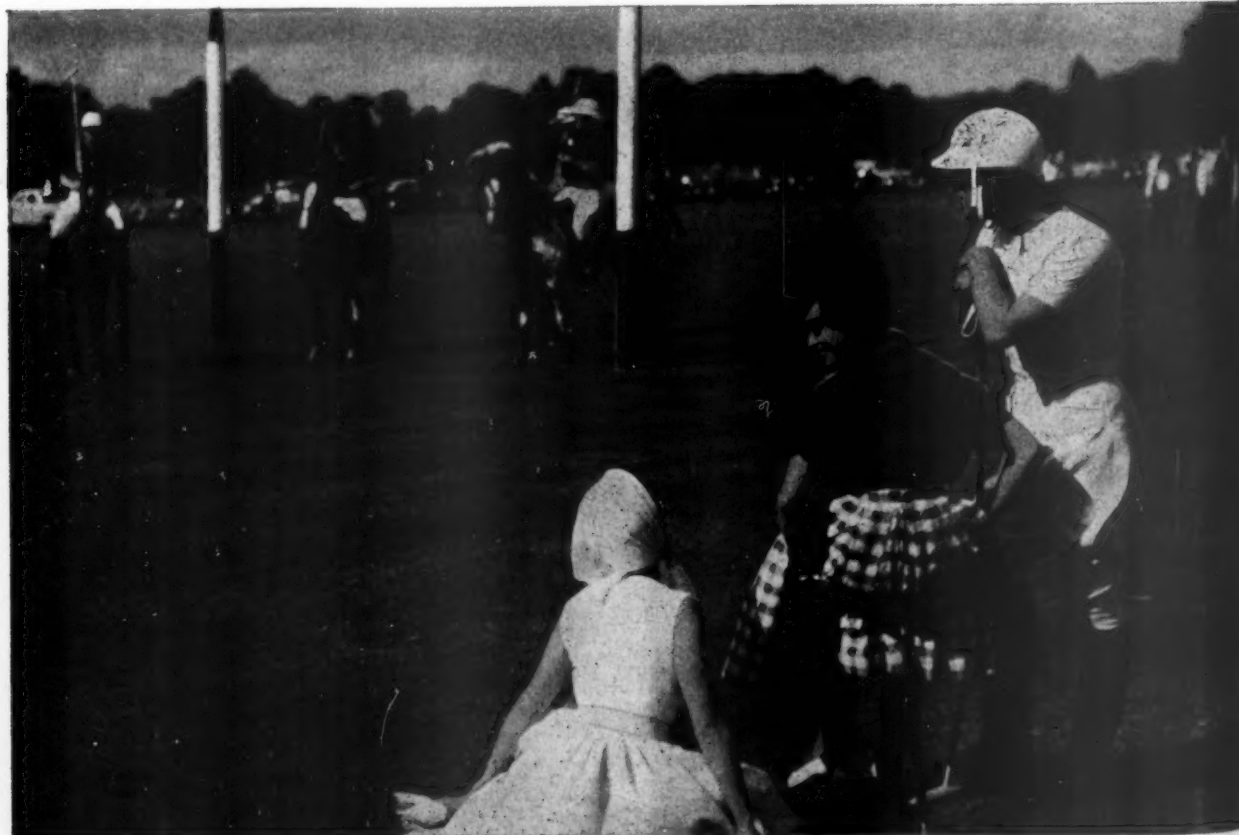
## DUNLOP FIRST AGAIN!

Thanks to advanced Dunlop technology, the 'Elite' incorporates a new man-made rubber exclusively developed by Dunlop, five years ahead of its time.

Its high-hysteresis properties are due to a new polymer S.B.64 which, combined with other unique factors, has produced a rubber with exceptional 'cling'.

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## Subscriptions

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## The London Charivari

**O**BITUARIES on last week's Fleet Street fatalities expressed regrets on many counts. I should like to add a lament for the passing of a skill. The bookstall men who dish out the evening papers at London's railway stations have one less to dish; for years, in answer to the impatient cries for "*Star, News, Standard*," "*News and Star*," "*Standard and News*," "*Standard and Star*," their fingers have flown unerringly, folding and handing, taking money and giving change, at a speed fit to send any time-and-motion-study man back to school. Now, with only two stacks, the whole intricate pattern must re-form in a painful readjustment of rhythms. And the home-going City worker must try to be indulgent if, for a week or two, the man at the counter takes longer to handle two papers than he did when there were three.

### The Tuneful Oat.

**S**NEER at the old drawingroom ballads if you like, but when Professor T. C. N. Singh of the botany department of Annamalai University,



South India, states specifically that the ringing of an electric bell so excites grain seeds that they sprout faster he is merely underlining the lesson of cause and effect taught in the first of the

Indian Love Lyrics—"The temple bells are ringing, and the young green corn is springing." Soft music broadcast over the fields makes the crops grow bigger, he adds, and I only hope that hidebound traditionalist English farmers will have the sense to see this truth amid the alien corn.

### Accolade

**I** AM glad to see that it is still possible to think of new ways of honouring the greatest living English-



man. An American collector has been defrauded of some five hundred thousand dollars in a deal involving fake Winston Churchill canvases. This puts the master into the Vermeer class.

### Stop Sniffing, Comrade

**A** BATCH of high-quality Russian scents will be on the market this Christmas, some of them very imaginatively named—Moscow Fires, Kremlin, and Cosmos for instance. (The last has a picture of a rocket on the packet.) Unfortunately, ideology has not always gone hand in hand with commerce, and others in the batch are called Spring, Youth and Carmen. An opportunity has been missed, for we already have scents with names rather





"I've just discovered something terrible—if you take away the whiskers Fidel Castro's exactly like Liberace."

like these, and I can think of several others which would have appealed to special markets: the flamboyant could wear "Ultimatum," the reserved "Norm," "Red Square" would do nicely for elderly fellow-travellers, and "Lenin's Tomb" for the decaying bourgeoisie.

#### But What Pitch is Black?

OFFICIAL approval has not yet been given to the new colour an architect and design consultant want to see on our pillar-boxes and post office vans. The old crimson, they say, is not "sent," it "doesn't come out at you—bing!" However, the hue they suggest, a scarlet, "absolutely sings." Whether this comes at you in a fiery coloratura voice or in Mr. Crosby's own brand of warmth I don't know. What I am certain about is that when I see a colour scheme of blues (a convention of butchers, say) to me it can only vibrate in the deep tones of Bessie Smith.

#### Fame

A MAGISTRATE giving a talk to girls in a remand home about legal and other topics on which they were vague was asked what happened if they wanted to get married while they were under the jurisdiction of the courts and told them it would be a matter for the Home Secretary. As this was received blankly the magistrate added "Mr. Butler, you know." There were still baffled looks until one girl said a bit doubtfully, "Oh, yes, Mr. Billy Butler."

#### Something Too Much of This

THE disclosure during a case against a Co-op. Society last week that it is an offence to sell loaves overweight must have set some other salesmen busy consulting the regulations. The righteous minds of innkeepers induce them now and then to give the "long pull," a little beer bonus outlawed by Lloyd George in the first world war to keep the lads sober. No weights and measures are as simple as they sound; it is far too seldom realized that the British imperial pound (oughtn't it to be commonwealth now?) is the weight *in vacuo* of a cylinder of pure platinum about 1.35 inches high (note the haphazard "about") and 1.15 inches diameter, which is a tricky touchstone for a steam-smeared night baker and would certainly have foxed Shylock.

#### Callant Loser

I KNOW how that little girl felt who, when she was told a story about a tiger-hunt, said warningly "I'm on the side of the tiger; I always am." I suppose it was inevitable that Gregory Papadakis, having built a radio transmitter and organized a corps of workers, including his fiancée, to broadcast on a closed circuit the answers to the chemistry and physics papers in the local university's entrance exam, should have been disqualified when Army patrols and security police exposed him; but if ever there was a case for some kind of honorary distinction surely this is it.



#### Passed for Attention

SO the Postmaster-General is to rewrite the preface to the Telephone Directory. I wonder whether he will still urge us to insure our telephones for £15 against fire risks, threaten to remove unofficial attachments (ear-warmers?) and warn us that he positively does not authorize the issue of binding covers (would he rather the wretched volumes fell to bits?). I hope he will be able to assure us that Albania has at last agreed to receive telephone calls. One other thing: "persons who for short periods become tenants or sub-tenants of furnished residences already fitted with telephones" may have their names and numbers listed free. Does this apply to those short-term tenants whose numbers are now listed in shop windows in Soho?

#### Interference

THE Association of Optical Practitioners is to blacklist opticians who use "obsolete and meaningless" letters after their names, thus striking a blow at yet another beloved British tradition. After all, there's no law to stop a man using any whimsical cluster of letters so long as he keeps off the better-known groupings like D.S.O. (which *could* mean that he held the Diploma of the School of Opticians) or F.R.C.S. (which *might* mean that he was a Fellow of the Regent College of Saxophonists). Soon, some busybody will be starting a Society for the Abolition of Post-Nominal Letters; and I don't doubt that for two guineas a year members will be entitled to put F.S.A.P.L. (Lond.) after their names.

#### Look, I'm an Electric Eel

SHIPWRECKED mariners are, in future, to repel the attentions of sharks by posing as sea-cucumbers. They will emit the right poisons and the shark, remembering the sensation of meeting a sea-cucumber, will go away. Most underwater news these days is about sharks' turning round and going away; apparently anybody who does not feel up to impersonations has only to bang them on the snout with a camera. The next thing shipwrecked mariners will have to learn is how to pose as whatever marine creature it is that is disliked by the sea-cucumber.

— MR. PUNCH





*Real name Dr. Gordon Ostlere. Has been anaesthetist at St. Bartholomew's Hospital and ship surgeon: left medical practice eight years ago when he had started writing his "Doctor" series. Has also written textbooks on anaesthesia (these not filmed.) Aged 39. Member of Surrey Cricket Club.*

**RICHARD GORDON**

**Minister of Health**

**3**



**I**T delights us all that politicians of the three parties so freely and frequently describe our Health Service as the best in the world, the envy of all civilized communities. But after twelve years snags must inevitably be noticed in the N.H.S. by some of its participants—doctors, matrons, hospital governors, the B.M.A., drug manufacturers, the Royal Colleges of Physicians and Surgeons, and even the patients.

These may be put shortly:

1. The general practitioner, supposed to be the backbone of the Service, has become its vermiform appendix.
2. People lounge about for months and months treating hospitals like hotels.
3. The doctor's surgery has become a clinical free-lunch counter.
4. The Service is bandaged in red tape.



*"But Malcolm, everything drives you to drink."*

5. It pays the doctors far too little.

6. It costs the taxpayer far too much.

I propose to abolish these little difficulties with a short National Health Service (Reform) Bill.

#### *The General Practitioner*

It will be an offence for any general practitioner to treat any patient, with a maximum of ten years' imprisonment.

At present, the g.p. is largely occupied with people who can't sleep and people who can't keep awake, thin people who want to be fat and fat people who want to be thin, girls who want less hair on their legs and men who want more on their heads, couples who want to have children and can't and couples who have too many and don't know how to stop, frustrated people who find themselves inadequate for life, and frustrated people who find life inadequate for them. The rest of his time is spent signing certificates, entitling persons to anything from more milk to less work, and from getting the youngest off an afternoon's school to getting the eldest off his National Service.

Occasionally people who are genuinely ill appear in the g.p.'s surgery, and these he rightly packs off at once to the corresponding hospital specialist, who knows far more about the business than he does. Thus my Bill would simply regularize existing conditions. Admittedly, the g.p. at present treats people with illnesses unworthy of a specialist's attention, such as influenza, the common cold, migraine, or eczema, but as these diseases either get better by themselves or never get better at all it is an obvious waste of the taxpayers' money ever to attempt treating them.

#### *The Specialist*

Much discontent is caused among specialists at present by the system of "Merit Awards," which are dished out by the Ministry to deserving consultants and kept as secret as a bookie's takings. Surgeon A can tell if Surgeon B has got the reward he should be enjoying himself only by observing such signs and symptoms as a new car, a more cheerful wife, holidays at Klosters, enthusiasm for the N.H.S., etc. As this is clearly unscientific, I shall bring the Merit Scheme into the open. I intend to start a monthly league for local consultants, prepared independently by the M.C.C. and the F.A., with Merit Awards for the top two.

This example will be published with the Bill:

	Cases	Won	Lost	Much the same	Patient declared had enough	Bad Anaesthesia stopped Op.	Points
Mr. P, F.R.C.S...	55	19	5	25	5	1	63
Mr. Q, F.R.C.S...	100	10	50	—	40	—	20
Mr. Y, F.R.C.S...	5	5	—	—	—	—	10
Mr. Z, F.R.C.S...	5	—	5	—	—	—	0

Some sort of Cup may later be awarded by the President of the Royal College of Surgeons.

The new scheme will clearly encourage an enterprising spirit among our surgeons, and as the League will be published every week in the local papers it will be a useful guide to patients in choosing their specialist.

The Bill will also provide for a Pool to be run on the weekly results.

#### Hospitals

All hospitals will be let to Messrs. Charles Clore and Forte on a 999 years' lease. As it now costs more to put up at Bart's than the Berkeley, their reorganization of each hospital as an hotel with an extra bell-push for the doctor will bring a striking saving in Health Service costs. Patients will be given free choice of hospital, though advised to book well in

advance outside the holiday season. An official handbook will be published resembling the *Guide Michelin*, with simple symbols indicating the hospitals' amenities.

For example:



Internationally Famous Hospital



Top Class Operating Theatre



Fracture Clinic



X-Ray Department  
(In Red = 24-hour service)



Resident Psychiatrist



Very Plain But  
Adequate Hospital

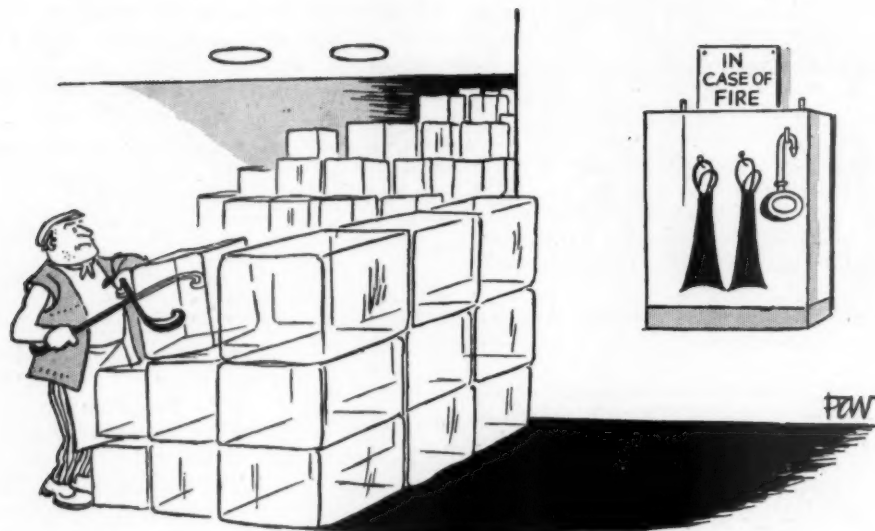
#### Prescribing

Most doctors' houses are large and sited for the convenience of the population they serve. They will all be purchased



"It was around here I lost my sense of humour."





compulsorily at a fair price and redesigned at public expense as Supermarkets. These will sell not only drugs and dressings but the usual groceries, detergents, dog food, pest killers, and ices. A doctor in a white coat will be on duty with the girls at the cash desk by the exit to sign prescriptions, particularly for the dangerous drugs.

I feel the principle of patients' satisfying their medical needs *first* and then obtaining the necessary prescription is a brilliant reversal of the system that now brings so many complaints from both sides of the consulting desk. It will not only save patients the tedious period of waiting and doctors the moral necessity of examining them but the profit on non-medical articles sold at commercial prices will allow the present shilling prescription charge to be abolished.

Certificates will be issued by machine.

#### Miscellaneous

The *Pollution of Beaches* will be encouraged. This will reduce summer road traffic to coastal resorts, with great saving of life and limb, in accordance with the best principles of preventive medicine.

Any *Anti-Vivisectionist* will have the right to a High Court injunction preventing any animal being used in a scientific experiment, as long as he agrees to substitute himself.

*Medical Research* on any subject will be permitted only with special permission of the Minister. As for several centuries the work of one generation of research people has been mostly disproving the work of the generation before, this will release a large number of highly trained specialists for useful medical activities.

#### Finance

1. The National Health Contribution will be abolished.
2. The remuneration of no medical practitioner will be below that of the Minister, who has had to undergo much less training for his job.

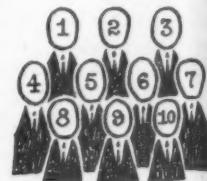
I intend to meet the cost of the Service with a royalty of ten per cent levied on all books, television performances, films, plays, newspaper articles, broadcasts, or advertisements, in which any mention whatever is made of medical matters, hospitals, or doctors. I am convinced that this will not only wholly finance the Service but the entire hospital rebuilding programme as well.

#### Administration

I intend to appoint as my Permanent Secretary Mr. William Butlin. Mr. Butlin's life has been dedicated to making people happy, and his persistent prosperity is sufficient proof of his success at it. As the bulk of modern medicine consists in the application of either pills or psychiatry to make large numbers of miserable people feel rather happier, I am confident that with Mr. Butlin's help we shall indeed have the best Health Service in the world, the envy of all civilized communities.

#### Other portfolios will be offered to:

- (4) **GWYN THOMAS**  
Chancellor of the Exchequer
- (5) **A. P. H.**  
Home Secretary
- (6) **NIGEL KNEALE**  
Minister of Power
- (7) **STIRLING MOSS**  
Minister of Transport
- (8) **FRANK RICHARDS**  
Minister of Education
- (9) **ARNOLD WESKER**  
Minister of Housing
- (10) **Col. A. D. WINTLE**  
Minister of Defence



# "With Which are Incorporated"

By E. S. TURNER

IT is a rough, tough game played on the edge of a crocodile pool, this game of mergers which has just cost us the *News Chronicle* and *Star*. It has grown very much tougher since, for example, the *Anti-Gallican Monitor* and *Anti-Corsican Chronicle*, founded to discredit Napoleon, was incorporated, fitly and without public protest, in the *English Gentleman* in 1825.

The press to-day is a tightening mass of incorporations, forced marriages and cannibalizations. Under the mastheads of local papers the words "with which are incorporated" introduce a hapless list of gazettes, examiners and intelligencers the bones of which have long since been spat out. In the magazine field the tale is familiar enough. *Today* is the new name for *John Bull*, which incorporates *Everybody's* and *Illustrated*, which in turn absorbed *Passing Show*. In name at all events, *Men Only* incorporates *Lilliput*, *The Strand* and *London Opinion*, which previously absorbed *The Humorist*. Even the *British Dental Journal* houses *Mouth Mirror* and *Dental Gazette*, and the *Journal of the British Society of Dowsters* includes *Radio-Perception*.

In Steele's day the incorporation of a *Medley* into a *Flying Post* involved no hardship. There were no comic strips to be perpetuated, no free insurances to be transferred, no men to be sacked in another hemisphere. More than a century later, when *Potter's Electric News* was being incorporated into the *Pembrokeshire Herald* and *Bell's Life in London* was being swallowed by *Sporting Life*, the pangs were greater; newspapers had discovered that they had souls and it was even suspected that their workers had stomachs. Yet it was nearly as easy to start a paper as to kill one. In 1892, when the *Liberal Pall Mall Gazette* was sold to a Conservative owner, the staff resigned in a body and "within a few days" had started a new Liberal daily, the *Westminster Gazette*.

Most of us learned the merger game in youth. No boys' paper ever failed; but sooner or later would come a warning of a Sensational Announcement and readers would be urged to transfer their loyalties to another, younger,

paper of inconceivable excellence; and if they wished to finish their serial stories that is what they did. The Liberal press used something of this technique in the adult field, but were gradually driven to establish the cruel and secret procedures in accordance with which the *News Chronicle* was pole-axed.

In 1912, when the *Daily News* absorbed the ailing *Morning Leader*, the union was described, five days before the event, as "An Unprecedented Enterprise in Journalism." The *Morning Leader* did not admit to facing any difficulties, other than the difficulty of trying to find room for all the riches which were its readers' due. The staff, while proud of their achievements, felt they would have been miserable wretches if they had not leapt at the first opportunity to avail themselves of more generous resources, which "by an entirely happy combination of circumstances" were now at hand. Not only would a great cause be advanced with new vigour but the serial "Lavender's Inheritance" would be continued in the *Daily News*.

The five days' notice of the merger must have given rivals plenty of time to make their dispositions. In 1928, when it was the turn of the *Westminster Gazette* to be assimilated by the *Daily News*, no warning was given to the readers of either paper. They were faced by the accomplished fact. "This is a sudden notice of a great change," apologized the *Daily News*, "but readers will doubtless understand and accept the assurance that an earlier announcement might have prejudiced its success." The

*Westminster Gazette* was not, of course, in any trouble; but it was felt that the two papers would be better able to propagate the cause of Liberalism in joint harness rather than as separate entities. Not much of the *Westminster Gazette* was to be found in the new paper other than the solution to the *Gazette's* last crossword. If the staff felt like resigning again and starting yet another paper they changed their minds.

Lord Riddell, then chairman of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association, admired the secrecy with which this merger was effected. "Where," he asked, "did the negotiations take place? Were they carried out at home or abroad? Perhaps the deal was consummated at some remote Swiss watering place?" His professional curiosity was left unassuaged.

The Liberal field was now headed by



"... Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds, or bends with the remover to remove: O, no! it is an ever-fixed mark, that looks on tempests and is never shaken; it is the star to..."



"I'm working on yours at the moment."

the *Daily News* and the *Daily Chronicle*. On a Sunday afternoon in 1930 the staff of the *Daily Chronicle* reported for duty and found they were not wanted. Next day the *News Chronicle*, as it now was, regretted that it had been impossible to give any notice, "but it was clearly necessary that there should be no disclosure of negotiations which were definitely completed less than forty-eight hours ago." It also said that "rationalization is as necessary in journalism as in any great industry." Rationalization was a polite description for what had happened on the *Daily Chronicle*. After that day a great many people disliked the word intensely.

It was left to the *Daily Telegraph* and the *Morning Post*, in 1937, to set an urbane pattern for a merger. The Editor of "The Empire's Senior Daily" was allowed to write a proud farewell in the last issue, as befitted "a journal which is old enough to have recorded the American War of Independence, the guillotining of King Louis and Queen Marie Antoinette and the Battle of Trafalgar." He thought the *Telegraph*

would gain the respect and esteem of his readers, "and in time their affection." The *Telegraph*, in turn, advised readers of the other paper not to worry if the causes they had at heart were "sometimes supported by arguments from a different rack in the Constitutional armoury." Peter Simple's "Way of the World," a feature of the *Morning Post*, went on a long journey, returning a couple of decades later decidedly refreshed. As a *bonne bouche*, the *Telegraph* gave its new readers a selection from the letters between the last Czar and his mother ("Give Georgie a kiss for me and thank him ever so much for knocking over that abominable beast of a Japanese").

These were the leading mergers of our day, but all the time uncounted tiddlers were being engulfed. *Lady's Companion* was merged into *Woman's Friend*; the unkindest cut of all. *Reptilian Review* found its way into *The Aquarist*. *Fascist Week* was gobbled up by *Blackshirt* and *Rainbow* was slowly heading for the harbour of *Tiny Tots*. Peg, Mab, Maeve and Poppy saw their

papers gathered under strange wings. Yet these were the fortunate ones, for hundreds of papers have died unmerged. No one was prepared to extend hospitality to *Barmaid*, or *Heretic*, or *True Vestryman*, or the *Harmonium Journal*, or the *Anti-Boche and Anti-Hum*, or *Shed and Stable, Hall and Homestead*, or the *Aristocratic Matrimonial and Marriage Advocate and Envoy*. Seeing what promising names died out, one feels that *Practical Christian* was lucky to survive as *Cohen's Journal*.

☆

"That dauntless veteran, Sir Compton Mackenzie, has just signed a contract with Doubleday, the American publishers, for a 120,000-word history of Scotland.

Sir Compton is 78. The book is not due to be delivered until 1964, when he will be 84.

"I don't know whether anyone's ever made an arrangement like that before," Sir Compton said to me happily to-day.

"Might be a record, in fact."  
*Evening Standard*

It might easily.



# Sunday Morning in Wales

*H. F. ELLIS opposes the opening of pubs seven days a week*

I HAD not thought, being unfitted for such a union, to find myself in alliance with the Temperance Council of Christian Churches in Wales, but so long as they continue to oppose any attempt to interfere with the Sunday Closing Act in the Principality I will gladly march under their banner. Likewise, to their opponents in this matter, the Wales and Monmouthshire Sunday Opening Council, I solemnly pledge my stubborn and implacable hostility.

The Anglicization of Wales has gone far enough. In the shops, where all is packaged and tinned, the packets and tins are the same old brands to be seen in Birmingham or Haywards Heath. The beer, in hotels and the larger inns, is increasingly supplied by English brewers. The talk you hear (though the intonation is unmistakable enough) is very likely about last night's "What's My Line?" That dull uniformity imposed by modern commerce and communications seeps even into the deep valleys and up the slopes of the broad green mountains. The Welsh themselves, in their hearts and homes, may be unaffected by it. The visitor, and the returning native, grieve at whatever weakens or blurs the outward divergencies of one country from another. There should be something to show when borders are crossed.

On Sundays, at least, there still is.

"What the devil's the matter with them? It's after twelve!"

"You're in Wales now, man."

Yes indeed. More than all the chapels and dressers and grey slate roofs, the shutness of Welsh pubs on a Sunday proudly proclaims that this is another land, a people on their own, with traditions and laws of their own. "Keep out!" says that unyielding door. "Back, you aliens, you hosts of Midian, you Sabbath-breakers, you dogs, you Englishmen! You are in Wales now, man." Grieved, and even outraged, the visitor may momentarily be at the deprivation of his morning pint, but will he not in a calmer mood admit that here is the foreign touch, the shock of strangeness that is the stuff of holidays and travel. He is abroad! The Welsh

Sunday, though not much cracked up by the travel agencies, has its part to play no less than its Continental counterpart. To-morrow will be not just another day. It will be Monday.

And there is more to it than this. The satisfaction of the shut pub, such as it is, is not the end of the matter. It is characteristic of the Welsh, who are the warmest-hearted people on earth but a little shy at showing it, to greet you distantly at first, even with a rebuff, and almost immediately afterwards take you in and mother-and-father you with kindness. The brusque "Keep out!" of the barred and bolted door is not the final word, and that same Welshman who told you with such indifferent scorn "You're in Wales now, man!" will almost certainly add,

after a second's pause to allow his true nature to rise above his inherited mistrust of intruders, "You could try the back."

Ah, the back!

Do the members of the Wales and Monmouthshire Sunday Opening Council, in their blind and misdirected fight for freedom, realize what it is they are setting out to kill? Have they no care at all for the essential Welshness of Wales?

There is a tentativeness, for the stranger, about the approach from the back into some Welsh pubs that lends the business a peculiar pleasure. This must be the door, surely, and presumably one just pushes it open and steps inside. Yes, and now what? Down here? No. Nor that! This way then?

## THEN AS NOW

*There will probably be controversy about the licensing laws as long as there is liquor*



### THE LIQUOR CONTROVERSY

'Spectable Citizen. "ISH MY OPINION THISH P'MISSIVE BILL'SH VEXASH'IOUS MEASURE. (Hic!) WHY SHOULD I BE D'PRIVED OF NESH-SH-ARY R'FRESHMENT, 'CAUSE ANOTHER PARTY HASN'T—CAN'T—DOESN'T—KNOW WHEN HE'SH HAD ENOUGH? SHTAN' UP, OL' MAN!!!"

[January 22, 1872]

In the empty, stone-flagged passage all is quiet. It seems a bit . . . After all, this is the private part of somebody's house. Can one really be supposed to walk right through the kitchen—or would a gentle knock be the proper thing? There! Nobody seems to have heard. Tip-toe through the kitchen, then, and perhaps try an "Anybody about?" on the further side? Or sneak quietly out again? It would be awkward if they came back from chapel, bonnets and best suits and all, and caught one hovering about on one leg here by the

dresser. But wait! From some far quarter comes a murmur, a low hum that has something of the compelling quality of the willows in Algernon Blackwood's story. Follow it up! Right and left, and right again. Poke a furtive head round the door, and there they are, a whole barful of them, gossiping away. Not more than half a second's pause, a bare hint of interrogation in the air, intervenes before the landlord's quiet "Pint, is it?" accepts the accomplished fact of one's arrival. There is beautiful!

One sees, of course, that Sunday closing in Wales is not defensible simply as an exciting experience for visitors. The regulars, it will be argued, do not share the pleasure of renewed hope, the uncertainty, the guilty thrill of attainment that are the stranger's special portion. The back-door route is such familiar ground to them they might almost as well come in by the front. Why not, then, introduce Sunday Opening and be done with it?

I cannot altogether accept this argument. Looking round at the throng of men in this Sunday bar I sense a difference about them, something not quite week-dayish that goes deeper than their sober Sunday suits. Casual, they are, and at ease; not peering this way and that for policemen at the windows or *agents provocateurs* at their elbow. But it is a conscious ease. There is, I will swear, a small secret pleasure in the technical illegality of the proceedings that makes this Sunday morning pint the best of the week. I may be wrong about this, but it does seem to me that, before pressing on with their reforms, the Wales and Monmouthshire Sunday Opening Council ought to try the back and find out.

Not all Welsh pubs are open at the back on Sundays. I never said that. Indeed if the police were to question me closely on this matter I could not remember the name of one of them. Sometimes a man may have to walk or ride a mile or two beyond his norm to find a yielding postern. How healthful an exercise! How keen the added enjoyment! Some measure of restriction is a condition of all the simplest and truest pleasures.

That is why, back home in England, I view the threatened operations of Mr. Butler in the licensing field with not much less alarm than those of the Sunday Opening Council in Wales. It will be a sad day for this country if ever it becomes possible to step inside for a drink at any hour of the day or night. I doubt, in such circumstances, whether many men will trouble to step inside at all. In its way the cry "They're open!" is as precious a part of the English way of life on a week-day as is the murmured "You could try the back" on a Sunday in Welsh Wales.

Down, then with the Home Secretary! And up the Temperance Council of Christian Churches in Wales!

## Man in Office

by Larry





## A Party Programme

By J. B. BOOTHROYD

I SYMPATHIZE with the organizers of that Socialist Fortnight at Walsall, opened at a dance in a local youth club by Mr. George Brown, M.P. I also sympathize with Mr. Brown, whose audience tended to groan and whistle impatiently during his inaugural address and took repressive action against some earnest softie who actually piped up with a question about the Common Market. However, Mr. B. should have had more sense than to talk for half an hour to a cross-section of Socialist youth itching to be on the floor.

"Mixing Politics and Fun" was *The Times* headline reporting the occasion, and it seems to me that this is the whole trouble. Now that the Young Socialists have emerged, after years of jibes at the Young Conservatives, they might at least take a leaf out of their opponents' book and try to keep the fun and the politics apart. If, however, they are committed to this policy of mingling the spot-waltz and gents' excuse-me with pep-talks on defence and the distribution of pamphlets on Tory mismanagement, then the following hints may be of service.

**Choice of M.C.** Avoid the obvious. The fiery political enthusiast, who has probably been the prime mover in having this ball-oum-rally at all, will naturally expect a prominent role when his plans mature. Nothing could be more dangerous. As soon as the cats see his Adam's apple bob, even if he's only trying to announce a statue dance, the catcalls will drown him right out.

Put him up in the rafters, on spotlight. Or even on the door, where the only damage he can do is to try to collect outstanding party dues with the admission money. No, your ideal M.C. is the crypto-Socialist with the Adam Faith look, who can stand by the trumpet-players snapping his fingers to the last four bars of "If He Needs Me" and then break in with a short, punchy item about Central Africa before the boys and girls know what's hit them. Results may show as soon as the next dance, when more than one jiggling couple will be exchanging speculations on the climate and geographical location of Mobuto.

**Infiltration of Agents.** Selected committee members, if necessary with complimentary tickets, should be detailed to spread the word by even subtler means. *The Times* reporter found it hard to believe that purely political motives had studded the Walsall dance hall with "girls with white maces and Brigitte Bardot hair-styles" . . . but what excellent work may be achieved by young ladies so disguised! "Do you come here often?" asks an unsuspecting Ted, stylishly twirling the *fausse* Brigitte across the small of his back. "Only when there's no protest march," she replies. "We've got one on Sunday. Coming?" And her partner, after a few thoughtful back-circles with his crocodile wrinkle-pickers, grunts agreement. Such tactics reap their richest rewards in the Paul Jones, where an agile and dedicated blonde, quick at the strategic side-step, may make six converts in as many minutes.

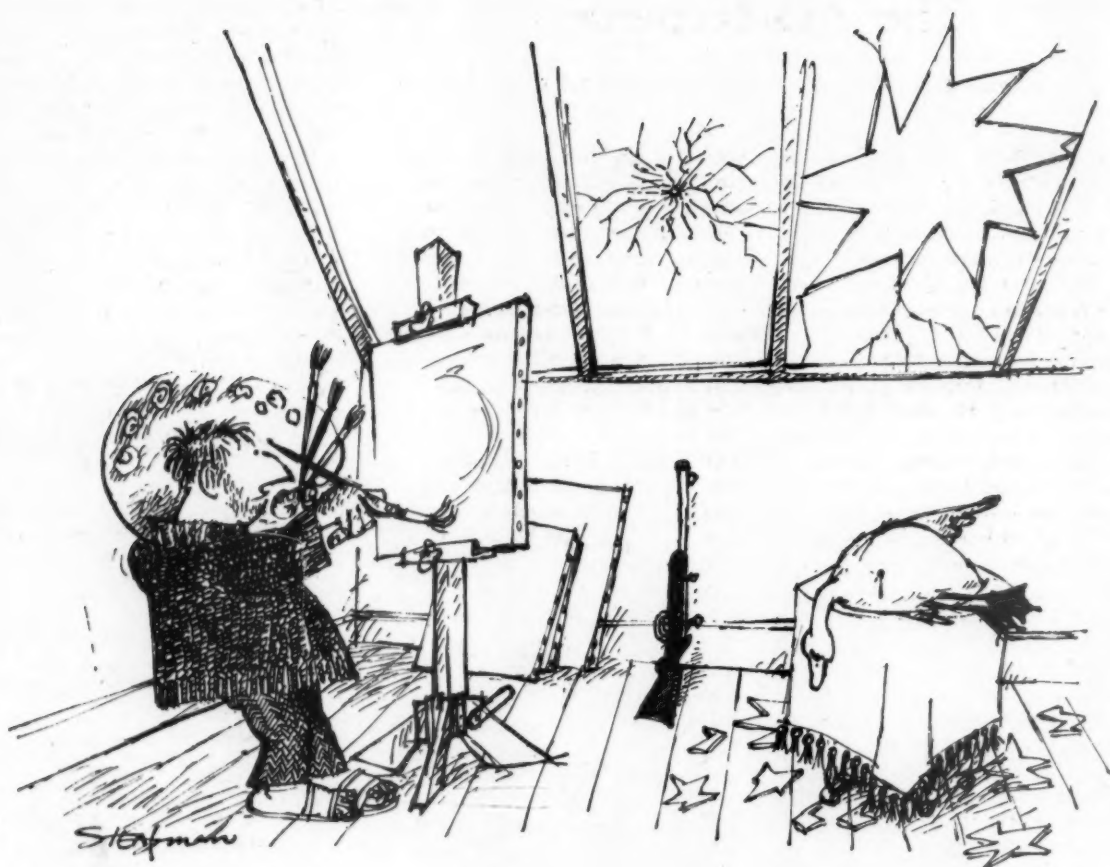


HARGREAVES.

**Sitting-Out.** Agents should be advised against this. Even the most agile and dedicated may find themselves forgetting the politics and going in for the fun.

**Visiting Celebrities.** There are two possible sources. The non-political celebrity with a light smattering of politics in his script is one: Jimmy Edwards, with a few asides about the crippling tax on euphoniums, for instance. The other is represented by the political celebrity—say the shadow Assistant Postmaster-General—who doesn't utter a political word all night, with the result that he draws admiring comments for his lack of spoil-sport instincts. "You would never think," they say, as he conducts the supper-interval raffle with all the a-political *bonhomie* of a TV quizmaster, "that he wasn't just one of us." Tory Party social statistics show that Mr. Macmillan makes his greatest impression when,





secured at great pains by local organizations, he goes through the evening as if he were just a nice elderly old thing.

**Rowdyism.** This is inevitable, and simply an outcome of those youthful energies which, patiently worked on, may ultimately be channelled into platform-speaking, picketing, banner-carrying, and so forth. Some precautions may be taken, however, among them a search of incoming dancers for knives, matches, indelible crayons and other undesirable equipment. A Grand Ball widely billed under the Young Socialists' ægis can do more harm than good if it leaves a trail of broken furniture, beaten-up caretakers and outbuildings still smouldering as the last motor-bike roars off in the small hours. Municipal authorities aren't any more likely to swing to the Left after erasing **BAN THE BOMB** in lipstick from the powder-room walls; nor does the local party

treasurer relish bills from the U.D.C. for stolen lavatory chains.

**Planning.** The dance committee may well find itself divided into two opposing camps with equally cogent arguments. One lot will argue that the event will defeat its purpose if no political flavour is introduced at all; the other will maintain that any political flavour will keep the dancers away entirely, leaving the committee to dance with each other in the otherwise empty hall, and club together afterwards to pay the band. The solution is to divide the evening cleanly between politics and fun, with the customers frankly forewarned that the next item is to be a short address, "Unilateralism, a Counsel of Despair?" by the Chairman of the National Executive; those not interested can then adjourn to the bar, or go for rides on their motor-bikes, leaving the committee to listen. A roll on the drums

could denote a resumption of the proper business of the evening.

**Is a Compromise Possible?** I doubt it. But there are subtle methods which remain to be tried. When Mr. Macleod at Scarborough sang:

*"Let the Socialists scheme their schemes,  
Let the Liberals dream their dreams..."*

he had the makings of a top pop which might lead the way to new indoctrination techniques for Young Socialists everywhere, but the idea has a certain obviousness, and the ground should be carefully prepared. Why not commission Victor Sylvester to launch a few new dances on the world of youth? Boys and girls who have fallen in love to the strains of the Tally-Clerks' Glide or the Woodworkers' Polka might be wide open for a chat on Mr. Gaitskell's future. But of course you can't be sure.

# The Masterpiece

By PATRICK SKENE CATLING

**W**ARWICK CHARLTON, the publicist and promoter whose causes have included General Montgomery (Charlton recommended the black beret), private-enterprise sugar (Charlton begot *Mr. Cube*), and *Mayflower II* (it was Charlton's idea to build her and sail her from Plymouth to Plymouth), has begun work on a new scheme which he feels may prove to be his masterpiece. He plans to build a synthetic, quintessential, microcosmic "Merrie England," a conglomeration of inhabited historical reconstructions, an artificial miniature country within a country, that will be more concentratedly English and much merrier than the real thing.

"I feel confident," he said confidently in London this week, "that I will enable tourists who are nippy on their feet to do England in a single afternoon—they needn't waste any more than that on their way to Paris—and in that time I'll show them what real Englishness is actually like—exuberant, lyrical, piratical, lusty and uninhibited."

"England nowadays is too dreary," Charlton said. "You can't be merry in a cinema or in front of a television set. Something must be done to remind ourselves and the rest of the world that we're alive." He was speaking over a heap of steak and kidney pie that reeked of tradition, and a tankard of black velvet in the Wig and Pen Club in the Strand, where the *Mayflower Project* was conceived and directed. "Look around," he said. "One of the centres of English intellectual life: the law and journalism: dark-grey suits and pale-grey faces. Where is the gaiety and sparkle there used to be?"

He said he got his idea for a British morale-booster while touring the United States, lecturing on the voyage of *Mayflower II*.

"I visited Disneyland, where the kiddies can get mixed up with gun battles in Wild Western saloons, and discover that Christopher Columbus's ship was sponsored by a canned milk firm. I visited Freedomtown, in New York, where Paul Revere rides again and again and they have the San Francisco

fire every hour on the hour. I visited Jamestown, Virginia, where they've rebuilt a seventeenth century pioneer village, and Plimoth [sic] Plantation, Massachusetts, where *Mayflower II* is permanently berthed.

"But in Britain, alas, there is nothing—just the real thing, and that's not good enough. A friend of mine from New York, Hymie Rosenbloom, came over recently and I took him to see Buckingham Palace and the Tower. It was a terrible bore. Everything was so far from everything else and nothing was going on. And the stately homes are so un-merry. They may be interesting for antiquarians, but once you've looked at a painting or a beautiful piece of furniture you've had it. Houses that are no longer lived in properly seem funereal. You can't see the people eating and dancing and singing. My Merrie England will have a lot of action."

Charlton hopes to build on about 150 acres of rural land within an easy drive of London, perhaps between London Airport and Southampton. "That'll give people somewhere to drive to," he said. "The poor dears never know where to take their cars."

"There'll be plenty of colour—bunting and pennants flying everywhere—and music. You'll be able to go into Anglo-Saxon England at one end and pass through representative bits until you reach the 1920s. That was when the merriment ended."

"We'll have Crusaders and Robin Hood and his Merry Men and highwaymen and Henry VIII and Edward VII and Drake with his fourteen-year-old mulatto girl (the first Lolita) aboard the *Golden Hind* and Shakespeare in the Mermaid Tavern—none of that terribly staid Stratford stuff—and Regency bucks gambling their lives away and knights jousting and singers in Gay 'Nineties music-halls and people in the stocks—there's nothing like the spectacle of public punishment to make onlookers feel like a morning in spring."

"There'll be maps showing England as the centre of the world and most of the other countries will be coloured

imperial scarlet or they'll be blank. Town criers will announce only cheerful news—machine-gunnings of fuzzy-wuzzies, nothing depressing about losing bits of the Commonwealth. There'll be special cut-rate season tickets for members of the League of Empire Loyalists.

"It'll all be madly authentic. People will be able to eat roast venison and throw the bones over their shoulders. The only departure from historical accuracy will be that we won't reproduce the olden stench; there won't be any plagues or any of that nonsense."

"There'll be some political touches—happy voters of the periods when voters knew where they stood. All the boroughs were good and rotten. Voters used to get drinks and money for voting: voting was worth while. And visitors will be invited to sign our petition for unilateral renunciation of the cross-bow."

"I have considered trying to get Prince Philip to open Merrie England when the time comes," Charlton said. "He understands about individuality and initiative and energy and the other qualities that once made England great and merry. But perhaps it might be better to conduct a national campaign to find an average merry Englishman and let him cut the ribbon. I wonder where we'd find one. But there must be one somewhere. Perhaps in the Potteries—or even in some unlikely City



boardroom; I'm not by nature a pessimist. I want a merry Englishman who believes that enough is *not* as good as a feast; a feast is much better. A bit of hearty self-indulgence would do a lot to dissipate the British Travel and Holidays Association's dismal thatchery and hollyhocks and forelocks and C. Aubrey Smithmanship."

Merrie England would constitute more than a nostalgic souvenir of gustier, more spacious days, he said. It would be a model, even a nucleus, around which a livelier England of the future might be formed. "We'll turn the whole place into a carnival!" he said.

At the age of forty-one, Charlton is convinced that the jester and the showman may be the only people who can save Britain from "the creeping paralysis of conformity." As he talked I felt strangely impelled to reach for my cheque-book, even as I remembered an American newspaper's tribute saying that compared with Warwick Charlton "Barnum was a piker."

We eventually emerged into the wet blue mist of mid-afternoon, and it was obvious that up to a point, at least, he was right: the prospect immediately in front of us might have been merrier.

## Pastoral

**C**OWS are feeding in the zephyrs; Some are cows and some are heifers.

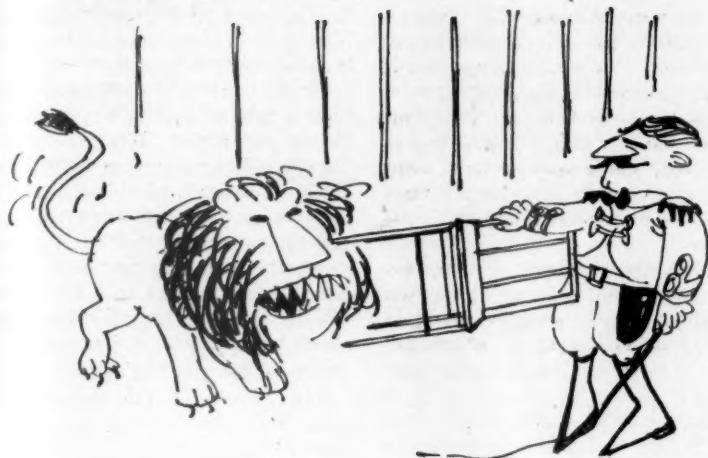
Horses whicker through the apples;  
Two are chestnut, four have dapples.  
Fruit hangs heavy in the noon;  
Half is green and half maroon.  
Blossoms brighten up the hours;  
Some are weeds and some are flowers.  
Ruddy cheeks in all the locals—  
Which are gents and which are yokels?  
Milkmaids linger near the spot;  
Some are maids and some are not.

— PAMELA SINCLAIR



"But wouldn't you agree with me that . . ."





## The Counting Game

By PETER DICKINSON

WE can all sympathize with Dr. Gallup, toiling away at his predictions on the forthcoming American election and knowing all the while that every sober citizen hopes that he will come badly unstuck. But I am in a special position. I once conducted a Public Opinion Poll and my feeling for Dr. Gallup has become both warmer and more precise since I learned that he suffers from almost exactly the same troubles as I did.

For instance, he is mildly disturbed by the high percentage of "Don't knows" elicited by his army of interrogators; but, as he ingeniously argues, many of these are probably leaning so far towards one candidate or another that they'll never be able to haul themselves back into a state of genuine agnosticism, so he dishes out about a quarter of this awkward figure to each of the two candidates, thus halving his "Don't know" percentage and helping to lower the ulcer rate at campaign headquarters.

I wish I could have done the same. Unfortunately my tiresomely high "Don't know" figure (ten per cent) consisted of a gentleman who hit me with his umbrella instead of answering my first question\* and walked off

towards Westminster. Perhaps I could have guessed what his answers would have been to my other questions but I happened to know that this is, pollster-wise, unethical. Once you let your interrogators start on that kind of caper there's no holding them. My sister-in-law is making her living at the moment by analysing the results of a lot of questionnaires which have something to do with the incidence of coughing. (She does this in a lung hospital where they have to do *something* now that T.B. is as good as cured.) From time to time she finds worried little notes in the margins of the forms. One, opposite the question "Are you ever troubled by

spasms of coughing?" and the answer "No," read: "The responder could not speak for coughing but she shook her head vigorously." This answer must still be fed into the machine as a "No" or next thing you'd have the interrogators scribbling vague doubts all over the form—"But the poor man did not look healthy" or "He avoided my eyes when he said 'Yes.'"

Dr. Gallup is of course very strong on ethics and allows his interrogators no such latitude; any adjustment that has to be made he insists on making himself. For example, some of the people who have glibly told the man on their doorstep who they'll be voting for are sure to discover, when the morning of November 8 sets in with a light but piercing drizzle, that it's a long way to the polls. So Dr. Gallup very sensibly docks a few of his figures and throws them away. Apparently he has evidence to show that natural layabouts are more likely to think that they are going to vote for Kennedy than for Nixon, so the Democrats come worse out of the process than the Republicans. I wish I had understood this sort of scientific adjustment. I got several results that seemed to be improbable at the time.

Another thing Dr. Gallup and I have in common is that we have both been criticized for making large deductions from inadequate samples. He usually charts the behaviour of the American people from the results of about five thousand interviews; my sample, as the reader may care to work out, was rather smaller. Both the Doctor and I believe that this criticism is wholly mistaken. Speaking from experience I can put my hand on my heart and say that I think the Doctor's sample is



ATCHISON

\* "Are you male or female?"

fine, just fine, and mine *a fortiori* is rather better. The trouble with interviews is that people don't know their own minds. They giggle. They say "Oh, Mavis, come and listen to this!" Or they tug at their beards and start rambling explanations designed to show that none of the possible answers you have offered them quite fits their case. It stands to reason that if many people behave like this (and they do), the larger the sample the more of them there'll be in it and the less accurate and relevant your results will be. It takes a *very small* sample to have a chance of excluding them. What the responsible pollster needs is a cross-section of the public that knows its own mind, like the gentleman who shook his head in answer to every question. I think he may have been Greek.

Of course Dr. Gallup and I are equally scornful of the Popcorn Poll which works by comparing the sales of

popcorn packets bearing Mr. Nixon's name with those bearing Mr. Kennedy's. This method is fundamentally unsound, as the popcorn-eating public may not be a true cross-section of the great American nation. To take an example, I have a lot of Irish relations and none of them eats popcorn much. If the same pattern holds true in the States (and why not?) the solid phalanx of Irish Roman Catholics who are going to troop out and vote for Mr. Kennedy, if they can still stand, are not going to appear in the Popcorn Poll at all and so this poll is going to favour Mr. Nixon unduly. My poll, whose sample consisted of people who were on the Embankment one fine lunch hour, is open to the same criticism; it didn't include any of the important sector of the public which was just then finishing its *crêpes suzette* in the Savoy but at least I knew it and was able to make the necessary adjustments. And I am just as aware as

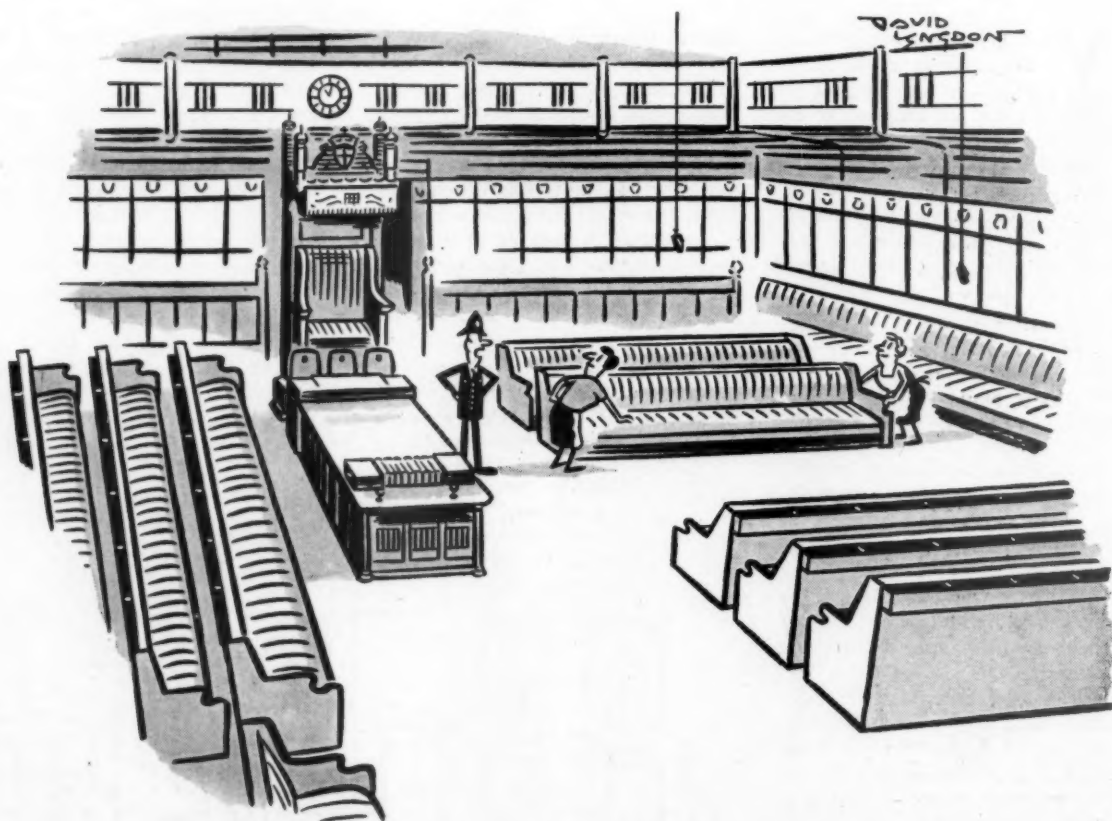
Dr. Gallup that the Popcorn Poll's having been right in every election since 1948 is an unlovable coincidence.

Finally there comes what may seem to be a point of difference between Dr. Gallup and myself: I cannot for the life of me remember what my poll was about, let alone what its result was. But if, as we are told, the current American election is remarkable for the unmemorability of both candidates it may be that in a few years' time Dr. Gallup will be quite unable to recall much about his own poll. Or he may just prefer not to.

☆

#### Dumb Blonde Note

"The G.P.O.'s main difficulty in recruiting staff for the exchange is that it needs operators with knowledge of at least one language, and that it is competing for this type of staff with commercial and industrial concerns which can very often offer higher salaries."—*The Times*



"Oh, and who suggested arranging the Labour benches this way?"



## I Wished the Floor Would Open

CLAIMING merit *alias* boasting not considered good thing. How much worse seem to be claiming merit where no merit. In the 'twenties made first sea-voyage in sailing barge. Third hand. Surrey Commercial Docks, "down Swin," and into River Colne with cargo for Colchester. All way down London River barge dog Rover rushed into bows at every buoy and barked at it. About 2.0 a.m. second night, pitch dark, barge trying to find Wallet Spitway narrow passage through sands from Swin Channel to Colne River entrance. No buoy. Twice barge went about. Skipper anxious. "Take a poke with your hitcher, Bill." Mate sounds with boat-hook. Rover silent. At last dog barks. Buoy. All's well. "That ought to have a light, that buoy." Many times heard same complaint. During war Navy used Channel, buoy lighted then. But poor bargemen don't matter. Expected rely on dogs. Agreed position of humble men deplorable. 1935 elected M.P. Put down question asking for light-buoy. Rather proud. Not sort politician forgets old friends. In lobby met Runciman, President Trade. "Saw your question. We'll look into that." Prouder still. Chap who gets things done. Feb. 11th Runciman answers. Last September big petition light-buoy. Approved Trinity House and Board of Trade. Light-buoy to be in position on 12th February. Nothing to do with me. Wished floor of House, etc.

— A. P. H.

☆

### "BARBADOS ADVOCATE Special Announcement

Until and including the end of August, all death and birth notices are being accepted free of charge.

Take full advantage of this free service.

Publications of such notices in the Advocate ensures an unrivalled island-wide circulation—a readership of 65,000 on weekdays, more than 100,000 on Sundays. And, remember, it also ensures a permanent place in the official records of Barbados.

All notices should be prompt. And they will be limited to five single-column lines."

Barbados paper.

Hurry! Hurry! Hurry!



"We don't seem to be able to communicate any more. Can't you nod these days?"

## Chatterbox

I TALK too much.

Not in a leisurely, euphonious flow,  
The commas going where they ought to go,  
Phrases well turned, in order not to miss  
A shaft of wit or shade of emphasis

But in a hectic rush of words that tumble  
Head over heels in a jingle-jangle jumble;  
Amorphous paragraphs with verbs awry,  
Grammar dispensed with; "from" and "to" and "by"  
Dangling at sentence ends. And hackneyed quips,  
Garrulous gabble, back-chat, chit-chat, snips  
Of idle gossip, hypothetical cases,  
Sly innuendos, hoary commonplaces.  
Gunshots of greeting, bombs of exclamation,  
Argument, riposte, endless explanation;  
Threadbare idiom, platitudinous crack,  
Trick question posed and vintage answer back.

Silence is golden, so they always say,

But I have never had the Midas touch.

I might succeed in clammung up all day

But come six-thirty—Is it really you? Years since we met. You do? I got it for a song. Gin for me, please. She is? Well, if she will trail her grandmother complex around she must expect to bring out the wolf in him. Wolfenden? Is he here too? Yes—gin, please. And that reminds me . . .

See what I mean? I talk too much.

— DIANA PETRY



# DIARIES



"After the service dined with the Bishop—a first-class meal but forgot to say grace—had indigestion."



"Saw several unfamiliar faces to-day . . . must have a recount."



"Feeling good. Spent my month's alimony to-day."



"Scalped three palefaces to-day."



"I woke early but felt too excited for breakfast. The bouquets were lovely—Mother cried all morning. I was nervous during the service but Henry was very calm. The reception was very jolly and we were nearly late for our plane. Our room has a lovely view over the sea and everything would have been wonderful but we had our first quarrel."



"Mr. and Mrs. Heatherington, Captain Rothschild, Baron de Courcy, Martin Dunhill, Greta and Joe Roth, Franklin Townsend and Lita all sent their compliments to-night."



"First day nearly over—felt rather strange. Everyone very nice. I scarcely recognized Mr. Promley . . . didn't know what to do with my hanky."



"Topsy was really very naughty again. After much consideration have decided to cut her out of my will."



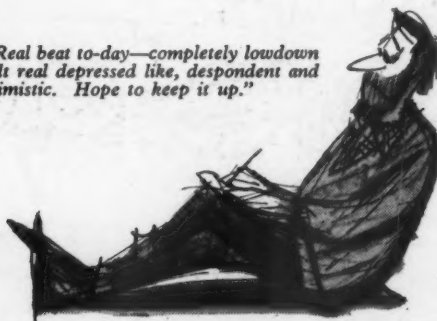
"Another disappointing day—will give it another week then to hell with it."



"Been going straight now for 291 days."



"Veni, Vidi, Vici—to-night."



"Real beat to-day—completely lowdown—felt real depressed like, despondent and pessimistic. Hope to keep it up."

To improve the standards of Science Fiction, PUNCH starts this week a series of SF stories in the manner of the great novelists



## Jane in Space

By STELLA GIBBONS

THE Eustaces were a good sort of family, occupying a house situated agreeably near to the rocket station at the village of Hedgerow.

Mr. Eustace had retired early in life from a position with the Space Service on inheriting a handsome fortune at the death of his father, and it was the delight of Mrs. Eustace to speculate on how far he might have gone had he chosen to remain therein. Julia, their daughter and only child, passed her time in walking near the station, where numerous young men were employed, and in wondering how far she might have gone had her father relaxed his implacable opposition to travelling by rocket.

"My dear," said his wife to Mr. Eustace one afternoon, "have you heard that Denewood is let to a monster—"

"How delightful!" cried Julia, "when can we visit it?"

"—of debauchery," continued Mrs. Eustace. "Mrs. Taylor tells me that Rocket-Commander Smasher's sensibilities have been sadly blunted by his experiences in the more awkwardly situated planets. I doubt whether we can visit him."

"A Rocket-Commander! Why, that is better than three heads!" said Julia and running to the window peered aimlessly out. "Pray, why should we not visit him?" Mrs. Eustace

was prevented from replying to the question by her husband, who asked whether she remembered a certain Venusian who had been one of his colleagues at Whitehall.

"Very well indeed," she replied, taking up her work, "who could forget it—him?"

"Oh, he was monstrous agreeable," said Mr. Eustace. "He would keep us in a roar—all arms and legs but none the worse for that—what is amiss, Julia?"

"Someone is coming up the path. It is—at least I think it is—a gentleman."

In a few moments the mechanical footman announced "Rocket-Commander Smasher," and Mr. and Mrs. Eustace rose to receive him civilly but coolly. Julia retired again to the window, but studied the visitor with all the feelings to be expected in someone aged sixteen who has spoken to no young man beyond the gardener's boy.

Mrs. Eustace soon decided that delicacy need not prevent her from gratifying some curiosity as to his domestic situation; that eye, that manner, had nothing to say to delicacy; and she accordingly inquired how soon his wife and family would join him at Denewood?

"I have no family. I am no longer married," he replied.

Mrs. Eustace was silent. He glanced at the window and continued with increasing agitation:

"Tis the conditions of my employment. You, as the mother of yon ripe pledge of mutual passion, must feel for one who, catapulted weekly to Orion and compelled by duty to remain there for the five days which are the equivalent of five years on Earth, has thrice returned to find that his *cara sposa* has sought consolation elsewhere."

Mrs. Eustace asked him if he had seen the new thicket, fashioned from pea-green polythene, which adorned the nearest corner of the rocket-station; Julia felt a variety of emotions as unfamiliar as they were disturbing; and shortly after he took his leave.

She was not surprised, while walking near the polythene glade on the following day, to see him step out, smiling jauntily, from the thicket. After quizzing her for some moments about the object of her walk he suggested that an excursion to Mars in his private rocket might prove agreeable. They could leave at once—the apparatus was moored at the station—see the great lakes of Mercury, the caverns and the startlingly named Plain of Jewels, and return ere the dew began to fall.







Julia did not allow her knowledge of her father's disapproval of travel by rocket to restrain her for more than the few minutes that convention demanded. All was gratification and pleasure. Even the little, and that dusty, which could be seen while travelling at five thousand miles an hour pleased her, and she would not admit that the glimpses of the heavens through heavy clouds were too vast to be agreeable.

When the rocket had come to rest in the framework designed to receive it and Commander Smasher was assisting her to alight, she was struck by the features of the crowd which had assembled to watch their arrival. These presented so much variety, of so unusual a nature, that the sight of them rapidly brought about the boredom attendant upon a surfeit, and she turned eagerly to him to inquire for the Plain of Jewels so well known to visitors to Mars.

"Why, this is it," was his answer, "see, these pebbles, each with its inner glint, they are rubies, emeralds, and all the rest. Do you wish to fill your reticule?"

The jewels were heavy and the sharp points of the metal in which they were contained tore the silk of the bag. As she was aware that they were of small value upon Earth and that Miss Taylor owned a washing-basketful of them she soon lost interest and began to look about her at the lakes, caverns and mountain peaks. They were walking slowly across the grey plain in the still, hot air, and Julia had to tell herself that the occasion was crowned with all the charms of disobedience in order not to find it actually dull. The presence of Commander Smasher and his attentions could not prevent her wishing for tea. Standing still, she inquired if there were not some place wherein they might drink it.

"Tea!" cried he, with a scorn of rational comforts that would have warned one far more heedless, "you stand upon the Plain of Jewels and ask for tea!"

Julia now perceived that she had been mistaken in him. Were she to give him her hand—and it was with this end in view that she had accepted his invitation—to what discomforts might she not be condemning herself? what wearisome grandeurs and unnecessary flights of rockets and of fancy? She thought of Mr. Gray, who owned Willow Place and ten thousand a year.

"Let us go back to Hedgerow," she said, "there is nothing to detain me here."

The return journey, though interrupted by a thunderstorm of intimidating dimensions, proved no less tedious than the outgoing one, and with what pleasure did she at last see Hedgerow again—Hedgerow, bathed in September light!

It was with complacency that she heard shortly afterwards of his marriage to Miss Taylor, the washing-basketful of jewels no doubt adding to the attractions of the bride.

Her own marriage to Mr. Gray some months later promised an attention to those reasonable joys and comforts most likely to promote complete earthly happiness.

#### Coming:

CHARLES DICKENS  
ANTHONY TROLLOPE  
RUDYARD KIPLING  
CONAN DOYLE

JOHN GALSWORTHY  
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"... now enriched with Strontium 90 ..."

## The Poetry of Sir Winston Churchill

By B. A. YOUNG

THAT there is a poetic quality about Sir Winston Churchill's prose, especially in his speeches, is something that has always been recognized; "sweetest Shakespeare" was one of the tutelary gods discerned hovering about his head by Dorothy Thompson in her famous speech of 1940. Some people have found it significant that the notes for his speeches are always typed out as if they were poetry, or anyway as if they were dialogue in a T. S. Eliot play, which is almost the same thing. Occasionally, actual poetic fragments can be mined like uncut diamonds from the prose—

Then indeed I could end my five years' service happily,  
And if you thought that you had had enough of me  
And that I ought to be put out to grass  
I tell you I would take it with the best of grace.  
These brief snatches seem, though, to be accidental, the irresistible efflores-

cence of a naturally poetic talent rather than the product of a conscious art. There is, however, a small but important *œuvre* of genuine poetry by Churchill, presented and printed by him as such, and because a great poet is one of the few things he has never been called, I think he ought to be allowed to take his chance with the rest.

In his poetry, as in everything else, Churchill displays at one and the same time a deep respect for tradition and a stalwart determination to strike out on fresh courses. This dichotomy is clearly shown in one of his early lyrics—

No more let us falter!  
From Malta to Yalta!  
Let nobody alter!

The form—those three brief, declamatory lines, each emphasized by its final exclamation-mark—is brilliantly new; and yet at the same time it is as formal as a triolet or a Japanese *Haiku*. The rhyme-scheme, an uncompromising AAA, shows the same characteristics; it is a scheme found nowhere else, as far as I know, in English poetry, and

yet it emphasizes the poet's inborn willingness to submit to the discipline of rhyme.

Churchill's later work exhibits the same duality. There is a brief epigrammatic couplet, apparently addressed to some dear friend, which runs—

No more let us alter or falter or palter.

From Malta to Yalta, and Yalta to Malta.

Here again the apparent simplicity of the form is deliberately, and originally, complicated by the use of the interior rhymes.

Churchill's rhyme-schemes are always interesting. In his early poems he is inclined to use the same rhyme to end every line, but he avoids monotony by the use of daring or unorthodox rhymes. For example, he does not scruple to rhyme *falter*, in one of his best-known works, with *Yalta*, despite the fact that at best it is a "Cockney rhyme" and at worst it is not a rhyme at all, since a true Cockney rhyme for Yalta would be *Nebelspalter*. This ruthless use of pronunciation is one of the hallmarks of Churchill's writing, both in his poems and his speeches. (Who can ever forget the Nahzees, and Monteviddy-O, and General Neegwib?) The fact that he sets himself these difficult poetic problems and then solves them in such a high-handed manner is completely characteristic of his work as a whole.

There is little "poetic diction" in the poems, which are inclined to a high imperialistic ring that occasionally recalls Kipling; though the use of proper names is sometimes handled with all the delicacy of Blake. In an early poem addressed to Franklin D. Roosevelt the place-names have been chosen with an art that gives the verse the sound of a great bell tolling:

No more let us falter!  
From Malta to Yalta!

Was there perhaps at the back of his mind the thought of that great bell of Moscow which an earlier poet, Mahony, compared so unflatteringly with his own native Shandon chime?

In his later work, when his technique had become more assured, Churchill's lines sometimes take on the tripping Wagnerian cadences of Swinburne. The same impulses are clearly discernible in Swinburne's:

As a god self-slain on his own strange altar

and—for instance—this line from one of Churchill's last poems:

From Malta to Yalta, and Yalta to Malta.

Churchill's attitude to life, as revealed in every poem of his that we have, is simple, humorous and urgent all at the same time. The whole of creation, he seems to say, was devised to do my bidding, and it might as well make the most of it. There is an early poem in which he is urging some companion to join him in a journey—

No more let us falter!  
From Malta to Yalta!  
Let nobody alter!

There is none of the tenderness here that, for example, Baudelaire infused into *L'Invitation au Voyage*. We are to go! I, Churchill, have spoken! Let nobody alter! The very arrogance of the appeal renders it irresistible.

When one sees how great is the talent revealed in them, it is sad to reflect that the number of Churchill's poems should be so small. Churchill's active poetic life covers only a few hours of January 1, 1945, during which all the verses quoted here were composed. It is thought, however, that there are other poems extant which may be published posthumously. An educated Member of Parliament recently retrieved a piece of paper from a waste-basket at Westminster bearing the obviously incomplete lines:

... report of the Monckton Commission  
... . . . . . halter  
... . . . . pray put this to Walter.

If this indeed a draft for some new poem from Churchill's pen, then we may well look forward to its publication with excitement.

☆

"SIR,—I ask the Missionaries of the Roman Catholic Church and the African Inland Church to show me the regulation in the regulations of the Kenya Educational System which grants them the right to open letters without the owner's knowledge. This concerns African Girls' Schools and in particular Kiminini and Kijabe.

Why is this not done in European Girls' Schools?

ALI KNAF

(Boys leaving school are expected to do their best to get jobs and to pay their tax.—Ed.)."  
Nairobi paper

Next question.

## We're Saying Goodbye to Them All

By LESLIE MARSH

IT'S a superb piece of open-air theatre, this dispersal sale of a Hereford pedigree herd. The backcloth is Welsh upland so enchantingly painted in russet and gold that I envy the cows for all the time they've had to stand and stare at it. It's theatre in the round; performers in a fenced circus, audience on bales of hay ranged in tiers—good view from all parts of the house—and compère on a dray.

The timing is perfect. Before curtain up at noon the beginners have been called down from the high pastures into the dressing-rooms, pens giving on to a grass corridor behind the auctioneer's wagon, where they are brushed and titivated. Lot I, and the opener goes into the ring, soft-eyed, generously

flanked, curly red-coated and white-faced like all her gentle family, so modest in manner for all their lineage as long as the Lupinos'. She is encouraged with a prod or two from the white-aproned stage-manager to keep moving round.

Sometimes the owner, a sad looking man no longer young standing at the side of the rostrum, helps to move on the lovely creatures he is reluctantly losing (because his health is failing) but I notice that he never prods them, he merely holds up his stick horizontally as a barrier. He has lavished time, skill, devotion and money on building up an army of aristocrats with better taste than Frederick the Great, who picked merely for size, not breeding. His is a unique deprivation. Head-



"I'm afraid I have bad news, Private Heathcote."



masters see their boys go in batches, Tiller girls grow up and are replaced, commanding officers lose their troops piecemeal, but who else sees all the living treasures he has trained vanish in a few hours?

Now the bidding is on. None too brisk. They need jolly along. The auctioneer, goodlooking, with the ready smile of a performer (only it may be genuine because he knows most of the farmers) must talk without pause for at least four hours. Even Tommy Trinder, who is at his best prattling to an audience about other matters without benefit of book and would have made a good auctioneer, might wilt at ad libbing for 240 minutes, but this man keeps fresh to the last lot. Clearly he relies on some used material—"You can't be doing wrong at this price," "I don't think you'll see another chance like this"—but given the glimmer of a feed from the house he flashes in to get laughs on which no one can tread. Glib, but informed. He's got to understand the points of the stock he's selling for an ill-founded claim would get the wrong kind of laugh. "And a very sweet calf, isn't she?" is reserved for a startle, and when it comes to the bulls "A bit of age perhaps but he's bound

to do someone a lot of good yet" has a disarmingly honest ring.

He's friendly but his supporting players terrify me. Three auger-eyed men standing at his side rake the gallery with infra-red penetration power glares for latent bids. Their eyes are truculent. "You skinflint there in glasses," I seem to hear them saying to me, "do you think we've come all this way to watch you scowling mumchance the whole afternoon?" I freeze, as taught in fieldcraft, lest any slightest deepening frown of mine be misinterpreted and trap me into paying 200 guineas I haven't got for a cow I don't want. I look furtively at the catalogue to compare the glossy photograph of "Playful" with the original, and I'm back in school dreading I'll be caught with the crib, only I never had to stammer through Caesar to three masters at once. Perhaps it wasn't fair to have come simply for curiosity and eaten all those substantial beef sandwiches and cakes provided free in a tent before the show started.

That last touch momentarily destroys the theatre atmosphere, but it's soon back; here's a heifer reluctant to leave the ring, as so many of them are, perhaps not knowing what's to come,

and having to be prodded out and away to green pastures (bull calves in a special enclosure where they are entertained with delicious chopped greens). She *won't* go off without really vigorous encouragement, so like the old twice-nightly comedians who had outrun their 9½-minute allocation by a full minute until some ingenious managers in cahoots with the electricians caused "GET OFF" to be spelt out by the footlights.

Nearing the end now. Some of us, fretted a little by the hay-seats, stroll to the tent (drinks are not free: you can't expect the auctioneers to slake yeoman thirsts all day long) and peer back-stage at the waiting calves in the wings. In all these hundreds of viewers there are barely twenty recurrent bidders. It's a paper house. The few who mean business keep crossing swords, usually raising each other by fivers, but for a less attractive lot, to the auctioneer's open disgust, creeping on like to-morrow and to-morrow in ones. Some old boys and girls of the Hereford school are destined for Scotland, Canada even. It will be several days before they are all taken afar and asunder and if I were they I should certainly look back and regretfully wonder what had become of those lush Monmouth meadows.

Prices fluctuate unpredictably from sale to sale. Last week, I am assured by the knowledgeable, inferior cattle at another dispersal made far more money than these. No one can say why. There are no City slicker counterparts to explain that it's all on account of what Ike or Khrushchev said or the centrifugal nuclear fission uncertainty.

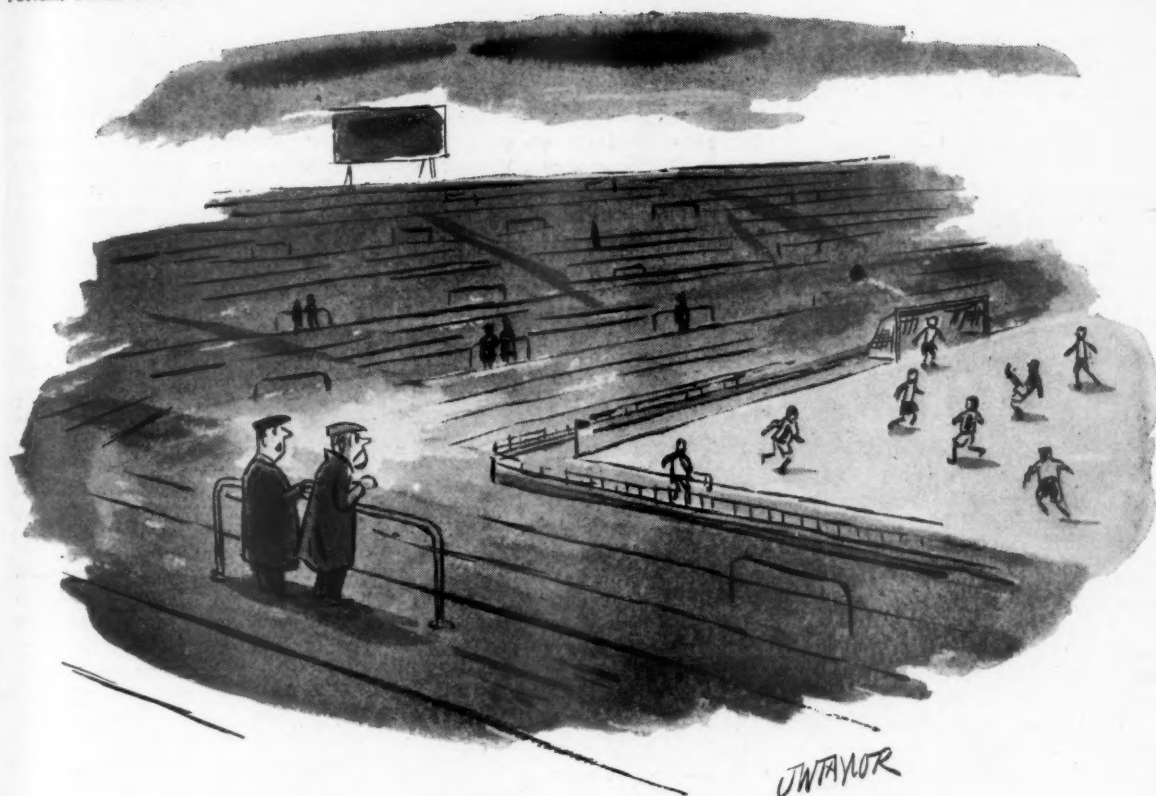
Now the big finale scene, the bulls, always saved up for the last. They look meek enough to inherit the earth. Even in a china shop, you would say, they would behave like tea-set connoisseurs in Cheltenham. Four hundred guineas the juvenile lead makes, and that's not enough really. The auctioneer implies that it's like offering Olivier rep. rates.

"You've made up your minds? All right, you know best. At 320 guineas... done." Always Done, never Gone, and no going, going.

Now we're away, those of us whose wheels aren't stuck in the grass park where the going is very deep. But I learn a lot more from my companion, at home. On his walls hang no Van



"Just once more round the bowl, George—then we'll have to ask the lady to make up her mind."



"Watch your tongue, mate—they might mob us."

Goghs, no "Dignity and Impudence," but champion bulls from the mists of time, some photographs and some engraved paintings. He talks with easy familiarity, as a racing man will of such legendary horses as Eclipse, Ladas and Minoru, of bulls that have made Hereford history. I comment on one at random. "Oh yes, Maxy," he says, "came from by Greensleaves, didn't he? Mr. Evans The Knubb. Sired by Dandy out of Butterfly, wasn't he?" Maxy, by the way, lived nearly a hundred years ago. My host is the inveterate first-nighter of this Arcadian show-business world. Maxy to him is a kind of Martin Harvey. He has every volume of the Hereford Herd Book from number one with its coloured plates before the camera came, and remembers most of their contents. He can laugh now and then at these old but happy far-off days and cattle long ago, for he produces a broadsheet of doggerel, written in 1884 by a few cronies gathered in the pub that used to lunch the farmers and carry them by horse from

railhead to showground. The authorship was a secret, for the verses were broad and sometimes actionable about some of the exhibitors' foibles. Just a flavour:

His cattle are "wonders" but never seen,  
I believe they're at Stapleton, near Presteign;  
I've seen his bulls, nothing much sadder,  
Split one through, he'll make a good ladder.  
He reminisces late into the night.  
Back to London to-morrow. Pity. I don't like the herds there.

☆

"Coesite had never been known to exist at all until Dr. Loring Coes of the United States subjected some quartz in 1953 to extremely high pressures and temperatures. He was doing the same sort of work as the artificial diamond-makers have been doing, but he turned to quartz instead of carbon."

Daily Telegraph

Just as much of a shock, though.

## Punch Civil Disobedience Campaign

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### No. 4

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\* Committee for Action of Some Sort at Any Cost



### After the Motor Show

**T**HE models at this year's Motor Show are as glittering as ever; the profit and loss accounts and order books behind them rather less so.

The Motor Show opened under two clouds—that of the sudden contraction of the market in the U.S.A. and Canada and that of the credit squeeze at home. It is a very extensive cloud and covers not only the British industry but that of the whole world. In France, Italy and Germany workers are being laid off even more extensively than in Britain. In the U.S.A. the gloom has hovered over the car industry for about three years.

In Britain, however, it should not be a depressingly thick cloud. The car industry is, by its size, the buffer of the economy. The authorities in their jerky attempts to "control" the growth of the economy depend mainly on three types of measures: Bank rate, restrictions on hire purchase credit and taxation. With each of them any tightening of the screw falls with special severity on the motor car trade. It pays a very large proportion of the Purchase Tax collected by the Exchequer. It represents more than half the hire purchase credit outstanding. When Bank rate goes up and bank credit is restricted, it is on the durable consumer goods industries, including cars, that the banks apply their main squeeze.

Conversely, when the order to shoot ahead is given, it is this industry which responds most quickly to the flashing of the green light. The acceleration of which it is capable was revealed by the tremendous performance the industry put up last year and during the greater part of this year. In 1959 it produced just on 1,200,000 cars compared with only 860,000 in 1957. In the early part of this year the accelerator went down in

real earnest and in the first six months just on 800,000 cars were produced compared with 560,000 in the first half of 1959. In spite of all the gloom that has been clouding the industry, its present rate of output is still higher than it was a year ago and the new cars being sold on H.P. in the domestic market are also in excess of last year's figure. Any setback is of course painful, even when it is as "marginal" as the President of the Board of Trade suggested when he opened the Motor Show last week.

The main cause of the present troubles is the contraction of the world market. That, without a doubt, is a temporary phenomenon. In its use of the motor car Europe is going to make further strides towards American standards of consumption. In the U.S. there is one car for every three people. Here in Britain it is one for eleven and the density is a good deal thinner on the continent of Europe.

The Government will probably help



### Animal Tibias in My Soup

**W**E are still sweeping them up—crane flies, the dear doddering Daddy-Long-Legs of our youth—horrid hecatombs of them. They are everywhere, blocking the sink, obscuring the light bulbs, leaving their frenzied fibulas with shocking abandon all over the place. We leap up from "Panorama" with fine fricatives as they fumble at our lips. We unhook them from our hair, button to the topmost button after several attempts to divebomb our décolletage; in the mornings we soap with them, share our shower with them, rub down with them, empty our shoes of their frail remains.

Nature is so wholesale. In order to ensure the proper balanced supply of crane-flies for the coming year, several millions have to die—and in the most inconvenient places. Their birth cases litter the lawns, their tremulous trifid limbs

the industry by extending the period over which new cars bought on H.P. terms can be paid. For a time the industry is likely to face a problem of over-production; but, by complaining too much about it, the manufacturers may accentuate their own problems, for nothing so depresses a market, whether in cars or any other articles, as talk of surfeit which encourages hopes of lower prices.

There is still no surfeit in such cars as Jaguars and the small sports cars of B.M.C. and Standard Triumph International, which continue to wend their way successfully to the United States. The inherent optimism of the industry as a whole is surely to be seen in the fact that the extension plans of Ford and B.M.C. on Merseyside and of the Rootes Group near Glasgow are not being changed by one iota. Where we shall put all these cars is another problem—a problem which incidentally promises a boom in road-making shares.

— LOMBARD LANE

our windows, plants, blinds, curtains. They disintegrate at a touch, poor stick-lets. The legbone may be connected to the thigh bone, and the thigh bone to the hip bone, but I never saw such a flimsy bit of do-it-yourself. Perhaps it is their very legginess that makes them unpalatable to birds for I never saw an eager rush for all this insect manna. While seagulls will work themselves into a frenzy when the first winged squadrons of ants come along, swifts tear ceaselessly after gnats and wagtails beat the bounds assiduously for sunning flies on the roof, for these waffly invaders there is no natural foe that I ever discovered. Near a river it may be another story.

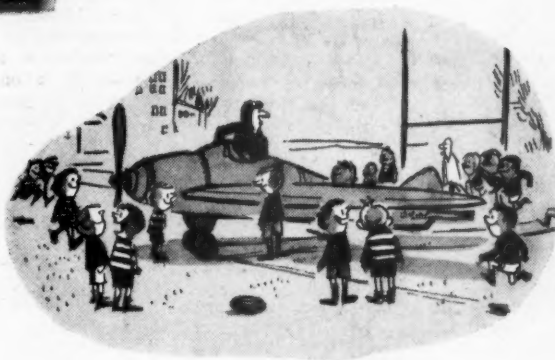
Spiders have no use for them either. They prefer something with more juice. A webful of discarded joints and all for that desiccated torso . . . no, the game is not worth the candle. So for over a week now the morning drill of clearing the night's dead has been going on—to make room for the new waves that seep in every time someone leaves a garden door open. There are, I understand, three hundred British species, two hundred and ten of them large. We have them all. So we slap, flap, scoop, pick, curse and try not to think that probably the precocious nymphs have already laid their three hundred odd eggs apiece before coming to make nuisances of themselves *chez nous*.

— STELLA CORSO



# WIGGLESWOOD PREPARATORY SCHOOL

Dear Mummy and Daddy,  
 Nothing much happened  
 this week. Hope you are  
 both well,  
 Love from  
 Robin x x





### AT THE PLAY

*This Year, Next Year* (VAUDEVILLE)  
*Settled Out of Court* (STRAND)

IT is a nice change from plays about matrimonial brawling to see one about two sisters who periodically scratch each other's eyes out. In *This Year, Next Year* Jack Ronder sees the sisters sympathetically and makes them plausible, the relics of an Army family come down in the world, and both in the late thirties. The elder is a good-time girl, who has had a number of lovers, and the younger is plain (and how heroically plain Brenda Bruce makes herself with every wile of the dressing-table!) and has missed life and is sick to death of doing all the chores in the flat for her idle sister, who cannot even boil an egg.

Yet they are hopelessly bound together by family ties and old affections; they fight like cats but cannot bring themselves

to separate. Mr. Ronder starts his play off with a valid statement of this tangle, and there it rests for nearly two acts. He gives us all the relevant facts quickly and neatly, but while he continues to amplify the same facts the play sags. Margaret's current lover is her boss, who presses marriage, which she refuses because it would leave Louie high and dry.

Unfortunately Mr. Ronder takes a way out of this impasse that rings false to Margaret's character. In the flat upstairs is a boozing violinist, charming but spineless, and gently fond of Louie; he talks himself into the notion of proposing to her, and Margaret eggs him on. A realist with her experience would surely have been the first to know this wouldn't work, but Louie reluctantly accepts the proposal, only to discover on her wedding morning that it has come too late. The idea of being kissed by the violinist nauseates her, and she dismisses him. The end of the play

is dramatically explosive, but one is not made to believe in it.

Nevertheless there are some good scenes between the sisters, and an amusing demonstration by Pamela Brown, who takes Margaret, of how helpless an angry man can be in the face of ruthless feminine stratagem. The sisters are extremely well acted. Miss Erown hits off exactly Margaret's feline character, good-hearted under a thick layer of worldly selfishness. And Miss Bruce is touching as the plain girl who rebels against her drab life only to find she is lost without her sister. The play is worth seeing for this exceedingly skilful partnership, and for Michael Gough's performance as the violinist. But it really has a better cast than it deserves.

*Settled Out of Court* is a mildly exciting whodunit that asks us to accept too many improbabilities. It has been adapted by William Saroyan and Henry Cecil from a novel by Mr. Cecil, but so far as I can see it bears no trace whatever of Mr. Saroyan's distinctive touch. An industrialist condemned to life imprisonment for the murder of a business rival escapes from prison and comes straight to the country house of the judge who tried his case, where all the witnesses who gave evidence against him have been collected by his daughter with bogus offers of employment. At the point of a revolver the judge is forced to re-try the case in his own drawing-room. The witnesses are such a fishy crew that it is inconceivable that their evidence could ever have carried much weight. The gaolbird, who is contemptuous of legal procedures, conducts his own case, and the judge, an admirably open-minded old man, soon convinces him that all the hokey-pokey of the law is for his protection as much as the next man's.

This kind of investigation creates its own tension on the stage but here its working



Lonsdale Walsh—NIGEL PATRICK

[*Settled Out of Court*]

### REP. SELECTION

Old Vic, Bristol, *Cesar and Cleopatra*, until November 5.

Playhouse, Liverpool, *The Wind and the Rain*, until November 5.

Castle, Farnham, *The Wrong Side of the Park*, until October 29.

Playhouse, Salisbury, *How Say You?* until October 29.

out is slow and involved, and the surprises with which the authors sprinkle the end are very artificial. Like *This Year, Next Year*, this play has better actors than it quite merits: Nigel Patrick, whose sprightly *bonhomie* is a good advertisement for prison life, Charles Heslop as a vintage judge, Maxine Audley as the victim's widow, and Eric Pohlmann as a professional impresario of such unconventional meetings.

#### Recommended

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)  
*The Playboy of the Western World* (Piccadilly—19/10/60), very well done.  
*Mary Stuart* (Old Vic—19/10/60), worthwhile revival.  
*And Another Thing* (Fortune—19/10/60), bright new revue.

—ERIC KEOWN

### AT THE PICTURES

WHY no film title above? Because apart from *Shadows*, which I reviewed with enthusiasm on July 27 when it had no apparent prospect of a public showing in London (and I did my spot of urging that it should get one)—apart from that, the only film press-shown this time that gave me any real enjoyment was something else the ordinary moviegoer won't have a chance to see. As part of the programme being presented at the National Film Theatre in the British Film Institute's Jubilee Season, they showed us an old one, Douglas Fairbanks in *The Black Pirate* (1926), which I almost certainly enjoyed much more than when I first saw it at the age of sixteen. The way films have "grown up" in the past thirty years is staggering when one considers that this farrago of nonsense, which is now very much funnier than most farces, was accepted at the time—by adults, not merely by children—as a fine swashbuckling adventure-story full of excitement and suspense.

*Shadows* is having a run at the Academy. Seeing it again, I found myself just as impressed as before. I grasped the shape of the story better, noticed extra details, was no less moved by and in sympathy with the characters, and laughed again at the amusing scenes and moments. In fact—since I had expected all that—perhaps my most notable impression was surprise at the amount of sheer laughter one gets from this essentially sad, serious, intelligent, expressive film.

Otherwise, this week . . . Well, *The Giant of Marathon* is one of those grand-scale Italian-U.S. co-productions in which nearly all the voices are dubbed, so I didn't go to see it. Such things are aimed at an audience that wants roughly what it gets

from a circus. And the Astoria is marking time (before the arrival of *The Alamo*) with an ordinary old double feature—neither film being up to much, but each having a theme that can be sensationally advertised. *Pay or Die!* is a conventional cops-v.-gangsters story unsuccessfully disguised by putting the cops into old-fashioned uniforms (New York, 1908) and giving the gangsters stiff collars and curly-brimmed hats and calling them the Mafia. *I Passed for White*, with more superficial gloss, is commercially angled to get the best of both worlds: it pretends to be anti-segregation while leaving us with the moral that segregation is the only hope. I'm not inclined to give either film any more publicity.

#### Survey

(Dates in brackets refer to *Punch* reviews)

Except for *The Millionairess* (review next week), and *Psycho* (17/8/60), which has reappeared for a time, the chief interesting films in London are the same as before: *Jazz on a Summer's Day* (28/9/60), *Black Orpheus* (8/6/60), *Let's Make Love* (7/9/60), and good old *Can-Can* (30/3/60).

Top release: *The Fugitive Kind* (14/9/60—121 mins.), impressive adaptation of Tennessee Williams's play *Orpheus Descending*. *The Time Machine* (12/10/60—101 mins.) I didn't think a success.

—RICHARD MALLETT

### ON THE AIR

#### No Confederates in the House

A MAJOR problem of the television magician is to compete with the technical chicanery of the medium itself. The disappearing marvels of Maskelyne and Devant are child's play to the television engineer and he daily produces effects on our screens more mystifying than any sleight of hand or magical machinery. When we view the magician, therefore, we need convincing that his tricks are being performed before our very eyes and are not mere visual subterfuges of the cameraman.

Chan Canasta, who is back in another BBC series of experiments in psychological perception, solves this problem by two main methods. First, he confines his materials to cards and books, and eschews visible apparatus; secondly, he brings along John Freeman to assure us that all is above board. Mr. Freeman, in his sedate, gentlemanly way, has managed in his various programmes to get himself accepted as the TV symbol of honesty and respectability; in much the same way as, before the Reformation, Mr. Harding was the symbol of irascibility.

Recognition of Mr. Freeman's con-man ability came upon me when I was explaining to a teenage friend just how Canasta does his tricks and she suddenly remarked, with the profoundest conviction, "Anyway, I know there can't be any collusion because John Freeman would never be party to anything underhand like that." And, just to emphasize it, she is a Young Conservative Beauty Queen and true blue as Baldwin.



"Oh dear! My husband seems to have missed stopping another goal."

Apart from the sheer professional brilliance of his hocus-pocus, Chan Canasta brings other subtle assets to his fascinating programme. He purports not to take himself seriously, speaks with a foreign accent and displays charming Continental manners. These were the same assets with which Polish soldiers achieved such successes among our eager war-time girls, and they serve equally well to-day to win our sympathy and co-operation as television viewers. One hopes all the time that Canasta will pull off his trick—the reverse emotions can be inspired by other magicians—and feels downright responsible if he doesn't get away with it.

Engaging, however, as are his personality and his amazing perceptions, I have sensed in this series that his explanations tend to be a little long-winded, that he seems to talk rather too much and to perform rather too little. No doubt the chatter is essential for diversion of interest and the placing of emphasis, but care should be taken that it does not become too repetitive and, in consequence, wearisome.

The facts were put before me, a few weeks ago, that "No Hiding Place" (A-R) had currently topped the TAM ratings and Chief Supt. Lockhart, during his three-year career, had figured in the Top Ten audience-pullers on no fewer than sixty occasions. Having watched the programme since then it seems to me that the outstanding reason for its consistent, commercial success is the consistent entertainment quality of the episodes.

"No Hiding Place" aims at no dramatic heights but tells a cops-and-robbers story simply, factually and rapidly. The crimes are credible offences for understandable ends and both police and criminals are

### PUNCH EXHIBITIONS

"Punch in the Theatre" Exhibition at the Royal Festival Hall will be opened by Miss Siobhan McKenna on Wednesday, November 2.

"Punch in the Cinema," Odeon, Leeds.





*"Trafalgar Square, here I come."*

believable people. The productions are marked by a high degree of all-round competence and a ruthless, pace-making economy in words and time. The plots and process of detection are straightforward and easy to comprehend, so that none may be lost from the TAM ratings through mental fatigue. Raymond Francis's portrayal of Lockhart, which seems to set the general key of the acting, is extremely soothing to watch—quiet-spoken, solid but shrewd, and a man of unswerving duty who will assuredly look after us while we doze before the picture-box.

The regular audience probably attend because they have come to know that they can always rely upon the programme for sound relaxing entertainment, and as long as Lockhart, now approaching his 140th appearance, goes on providing that I can see no reason why they shouldn't have him forever.

The new BBC series "The Friday Show" was launched in fine style with Dennis Lotis as the star, and if the same musical standards are maintained in later offerings we shall be very well done by. Apart from winning my sympathy for life by his gallantry against overwhelming odds in "Paul Slickey," I find Dennis Lotis our most pleasing singer in the Sinatra manner, and the swinging polish of his opening numbers set the show off at beautiful pace. There was excellent support provided by the King Brothers, Sheila Buxton and Sheila O'Neill, and I thought we were in for a top-class half-hour or so until the music stopped and the sketch hit me. It was as sadly bad as the rest had been good, and demanded that David Jacobs, Peter Haigh, Derek Bond and Dennis Lotis should act as men would if they were women at a bridge party—if you get what I mean. Put over in five lines by Alan

King, the idea might have been funny, but spread out as a sketch over weary minutes it just made one cringe with embarrassment for the absurd actors. Fortunately, however, the show soon went back to music, singing and pretty girls again, things sparkled once more in the opening style, and I was left fervently hoping that they can keep it up in coming weeks without Lotis.

—PATRICK RYAN

☆

"Coun. T. W. Warburton said there had been a distinct feeling that valuable work at Heaton Royds School was, to some extent, nullified by throwing these children into the secondary education stream at the age of 121."—Bradford Telegraph and Argus

Time they were earning a living, really.

# BOOKING OFFICE

## A DYING FALL

By VIOLET POWELL

**Trumpets from the Steep.** Lady Diana Cooper. *Rupert Hart-Davis*, 25/-

**A Family Album.** The Duke of Windsor. *Cassell*, 21/-

THE backbone of *Trumpets from the Steep*, Lady Diana Cooper's final volume of memoirs, may be said to be the letters that she exchanged with the late Conrad Russell. In one of the earliest he writes that "Wars make it impossible to be happy," and the principal unhappinesses to him were his war-time separations from the author. Lady Diana wrote letters to her son that were diaries to keep him in touch with his parents; she wrote letters to Doctor Kommer, her son's guardian in the United States, that were full of stiff-upper-lippishness; but it was to Conrad Russell that she told her panics and pleasures as she followed Sir Duff Cooper over perilous wartime seas. In return she received letters about the Home Front on Conrad Russell's Mendip farm, and of how the Milk Board wrote to him calling the threat of invasion "War Disruption" and adding (in connection with cheese-making) "In this regard I suggest that an over-meticulous technique need not be visualized under the circumstances." Meanwhile at Bognor Lady Diana was herself wrestling with poultry, bees and a cow. She became so fond of this last animal that she has ever since felt the need to keep a cow by her, and she found it a wrench when her husband's mission took them to Singapore. Her always fresh interest in all nature and all art brought her some relaxation among the agonizing tragedies of the British collapse in the Far East, but understandably she has limited this section of the book to her own letters, with few comments except of general lament for the apathy of many concerned in Singapore's defences. Among the trials of their journey home were at least three false starts from the Cairo airfield.

A further spell in England was followed by a mission to the Gaullist Forces in Algiers, with the promise that Sir Duff would be made the first Ambassador to liberated France. This mission began in icy discomfort, but in time Lady Diana turned her wilderness

into a garden, which was a refuge both for birds of passage and those stationed in what she refers to as "cold, waterless diggings." *Parties carrées* with the Soviet representative and his wife were a nightmare that was to pursue them to liberated Paris. Here Lady Diana found herself able to sleep in Pauline Borghese's bed, a test at which some earlier envoys had flinched. Among her many portraits of the top dogs of war the most charming is that of General De Latre de Tassigny, who was so pleased with the Coopers' son's description of the fagging system at Eton that he took to calling "boy" when summoning his staff.

After the election of 1945 it was clear that the appointment in Paris was bound to end before its normal term, though Ernest Bevin became a close friend, singing Victorian songs with his hostess while his detective lay in passed-out slumber. The political climax of Sir Duff's mission was to work for the achievement of the Treaty of Dunkirk, signed between England and France in 1947. Six months later he was dismissed into private life, leaving his library as his monument in the Paris Embassy. It is cheering to read that after vicissitudes



the elegant furnishings have been restored and a commemorative inscription added. Otherwise the last pages of Lady Diana's book show traces of a natural autumnal melancholy, for her husband had not many years left in which to write his books in the seclusion of the eighteenth century château they had found on the edge of the park at Chantilly. She chooses to bow herself out of the camera's lens with Cecil Beaton's picture of herself dressed as Tiepolo dressed Cleopatra.

As it happens the Duke of Windsor mentions Lady Diana in his *Family Album*, which, with the assistance of Lord Kinross, he has made from what it would be appropriate to call shreds and patches; for clothes are dealt with in great detail. Hints are given for making a bearskin more comfortable before ceremonial parades, and at the other extreme we are told that when cruising off Dalmatia in 1936 the party were dressed with such informality that the ever-observant Lady Diana, who was a guest, noticed the Yugoslavs' difficulty in spotting the King. Presumably designs on the American market account for the rather surprising image of Queen Mary being served with fruit juice in a "pitcher." Some interesting photographs lend weight to this slight book, particularly remarkable being the Duke's stalking trousers in Balmoral tartan.

### NEW FICTION

**To Kill a Mockingbird.** Harper Lee.

*Heinemann*, 16/-

**The Proud American Boy.** Russell Braddon.

*Hutchinson*, 18/-

**Yesterday's Hero.** Otis Carney. *Hodder and Stoughton*, 16/-

**The Waters of Kronos.** Conrad Richter.

*Gollancz*, 13/6

After a year spent consuming the modern American novel the way children consume iced-lollies I now report on the results of my gluttony. I'm just the same as I ever was on the outside, but something's gone soft within. I feel that life needs facing fair and square, and that you've got to go along with the group. On the other hand, beware of conformity. I feel that the South is culturally rich and strange, but I also feel the blood on my hands. I'm free of all past creeds and traditions, but somebody please help me, I can't remember who, deep down inside, I am.

The American novel has its own themes and obsessions, as it has to; but what worries me is that these obsessions grow more and more limited as if the American novel, having charted out its bit of territory, is compelled to work it dry before it moves on elsewhere. There is a terrifying efficiency in the performance of so many young novelists, and yet America is in some ways more in the grip of the literary cliché than we are.

Harper Lee in her first novel has turned to a recurrent theme, the theme of the guilt felt by the white man for what he has done to the negro. She also chooses to tell her story through the eyes of children, a strategy that I cannot normally bear because it prevents an adequate moral judgment on the fable. But Miss Lee has taken her risks and emerged triumphant. What is so good about *To Kill a Mockingbird* is not the substance but the tone with which it is treated. The story becomes a truthful tale about the difficulties of living well in a world where ignorance and prejudice make inroads on human decency. She understands her social scene, the American South; but her gallery of people has moral as well as social relevance. The good stands out from the bad at all levels. There is a splendid comic scene where the narrator, a young girl, goes to school for the first time and is taught by a Dewey-trained schoolteacher who spans her because she is too intelligent and not one of The Group. But the point is made; intelligence and decency are positive values and this is why Miss Lee is such a good novelist.

Mr. Braddon is not an American, but in *The Proud American Boy* he handles the same material—a charge of rape brought against an eight-year-old negro in the South. Braddon has all the right values, but they don't mean anything, because they are unproved within the tale. He is completely efficient and tells a good story but it doesn't ring true. The events he describes could happen; but Mr. Braddon is too distant from his characters, too concerned with making an abstract point, to say why.

*Yesterday's Hero* is a novel about a dashing young man determined to make his way in American life without kowtowing to anyone. Otis Carney writes with great clarity and observation, but he treads over very familiar ground, and his lesson—that there are faults on both sides, in America and in his hero—is scarcely a fresh one. Surviving a plane-crash in Mexico the hero, after a long walk through desert to a religious mission, learns to encounter himself.

Conrad Richter, in *The Waters of Kronos*, has another guise for the same theme. It is a trick novel; an old man returns to his home-town and finds it under water (submerged beneath time, submerged in the personality). He somehow manages to re-enter the town as it was when he was a boy, and meets himself on the street. He so learns that in hating his father he has in fact been hating what he had himself become. Mr. Richter achieves his purpose in a strange, poetic style that is the triumph of the book; it enables him to give verisimilitude to his improbabilities. But it fails in the end to give freshness to an outworn theme.

—MALCOLM BRADBURY

#### LITTLE BOOKS ON GREAT MEN

**Curzon.** *The End of an Epoch.* Leonard Mosley. Longmans, 30/-

Not a very good and not a very pleasant book—another example of this new

Beaverbrook technique of buying up history and then abolishing it. All too much of the book is filled with gossip about Curzon's private life too intimate to be tolerable. There are ten pages about the ridiculous affair with Elinor Glyn. The ups and downs of his relations with the second Lady Curzon are recounted in a detail that is insufferable. To make room for such tittle-tattle the partition of Burma has to be dismissed in a sentence. There is not a word about the quarrel which led to the resignation of Edwin Montagu from the India Office—not a word about the Parliament Act or the political crisis of the years before the war. Curzon was indeed a bewildering mixture of the baby and the statesman—an aristocrat who was not a gentleman—but if he was as absurd a man as Mr. Mosley imagines it was merely an indignity to write his life at all, and certainly no record of intrigues is required to account for George V's preference of Baldwin to him. No sane man could have preferred otherwise. In short a book *pour rive*.

—CHRISTOPHER HOLLIS

**Lloyd George.** Earl Lloyd George of Dwyfor. Muller, 21/-

This horrible book seems to have been inspired by the author's loyalty to his mother, but all it reveals is his hatred for his father. It adds only one significant thing to previous biographies of the Welsh Wizard: it dwells, with all the affection of a vulture for carrion, on Lloyd George's weakness for women. If this had been a vital factor in shaping his career there might have been some point in this obsession; but it never was and in consequence the endless keyhole-gossip is merely repellent. It would not, in fact, have been worth devoting so much space to this book if it were not for the possibility that some people might imagine it to be a serious contribution to the study of contemporary affairs.

—B. A. YOUNG

#### TRADE UNIONISM IN THE CLOUDS

**The Bargainers.** George Cyriax and Robert Oakeshott. Faber, 21/-

Since the war the unions have more than doubled their membership, yet they are in danger of losing the respect and confidence of the rest of the British community. The authors of this timely, constructive and, above all, readable book on

a generally unmanageable subject analyse the reasons for the decline in the unions' popular esteem and suggest a programme of recovery. "The role of the unions in the future," they say, "would therefore seem to be that of providing a level-headed administration and a business-like service for the working man in industry." Provided that they can make a tactical withdrawal from their "over-extended political and social commitments," and provided that they can recruit enough leaders of the old quality, they should be able to press effectively for real improvements—for increasingly necessary fringe benefits (redundancy pay, longer holidays, pensions and so on), higher status in the business hierarchy, protection against the shoddy retail goods that rob wage increases of their meaning and value, and for consultative equality. This is a study based on a sympathetic understanding of the worker's problems, and as such it is a valuable contribution to one of to-day's most urgent discussions.

—BERNARD HOLLOWOOD

#### ENGLISHMEN IN THE SUN

**Without Let or Hindrance.** Eric Cleugh. Cassell, 21/-

**The White Rajahs.** Steven Runciman. Cambridge, 27/6

Mr. Cleugh, for thirty-six years Foreign Service Officer and eventually full-blown Ambassador, has served in chilly Poland and temperate Paris but he is most at home in nearly tropical Mexico or Los Angeles or Panama. He loves warm vivacious movement; he loves foreigners and he chooses to give the impression that life in the diplomatic service is a continuous series of highly-coloured funny stories of a kind to be illuminated, as they are here, by lively "Anton" drawings. When he ceases now and then from playing the cheerful buffoon or indulging in praise of unlimited strong drink he has things to say worth hearing, and frankly he is at his best when most serious. His duties have ranged from rescuing distressed British spinsters accused of shoplifting to staging royal receptions, and through his career it has been his concern, though at times you might not believe it, to uphold his country's interests and prestige.

Far other is the immense story of the Brookes of Sarawak. In the north-west corner of the huge island of Borneo under







## BLOOD COUNT

the very equator there has been coming into being from about 1840 onwards a new nation all Asiatic but brought to life by three members (uncle, nephew, son) of a west-country English family. Here their ever amazing rise to independent kingship among a loyal population is recorded in living detail, the two principal characters, Sir James and Sir Charles, stepping down from austere heights of immaculate historic achievement to become mere human beings faced with unceasing material difficulties.

The record passes from the crude period of the suppression of fashionable head-hunting and the long-drawn fight against traditional piracy to the better days when many races—Malay, Dyak, Chinese, Indian—have come peacefully together within the British Commonwealth, and always it is the story of the Brookes. Sir Steven, in his established style of completely conscientious but never tedious accuracy, has here written a book that no right Englishman who still has a lingering feeling for the British *raj* can fail to treasure.

— G. CONWAY PLUMBE

## QUICK PROFITS

**The South Sea Bubble.** John Carswell. Cresset, 30/-

When the South Sea Bubble burst the shock was felt everywhere in Britain, for the orgy of speculation had grown more and more hysterical. As respectable a man as Isaac Newton lost £20,000. Investigation by the Secret Committee of the House of Commons showed the books to have been cooked by the directors, and numbers of public men bribed with large holdings of fictitious stocks. The King had been Governor of the Company, which turned out simply a finance corporation—slaving having proved unprofitable.

Mr. Carswell's book is a scholarly and full-scale study of this lurid chapter in the history of the City. His account of the struggles between the South Sea Company and the Bank of England involves the ordinary reader in fairly stiff economics, but they are well worth weathering for the interest of the Bubble as a social phenomenon. At least it must have provided splendid fuel for eighteenth-century sermons, and Guy's Hospital was built with the profits Thomas Guy had the sense to take.

— ERIC KEOWN

**The Sleeping Dogs.** Elizabeth Ferrars. *Crime Club Choice*, 10/6. Prostitute, acquitted of child-murder five years back, disappears just when her signature is needed for her memoirs, due to appear in the *Alarum*. Ghost-writer's sister-in-law, a pleasant if stock-type heroine, searches for her and solves the old murder in the process. Beneath exciting, if rather English, surface lies solid understanding of the effect of one evil act on many lives.

**Murder Out of School.** Ivan T. Ross. *Heinemann*, 13/6. American schoolmaster's prize pupil, Puerto Rican, is caught in act of holding up shabby local grocer. Schoolmaster cannot believe it was as simple as that and proves it, after some loss of blood, in teeth of police, defence lawyer, headmaster, etc. (the last done with a nice satiric touch; it's the kind of school where teachers have to punch a time clock when they arrive). Most enjoyable.

**The Girl in the White Mercedes.** Jack Usher. *Heinemann*, 13/6. Ex-con rescues girl from drug-ring in Hollywood. Efficient, semi-tough, very readable. Piquantly respectable love-interest.

**A Touch of Stage Fright.** Jocelyn Davey. *Chatto and Windus*, 15/-. A disappointment. Garrulous, sensitive Ambrose Usher

visits, on a hint from hush-hush superiors, Lighthouse Island, near New York, habitat of actors' colony. Local impresario is blown up almost at once. Usher worriedly intuitively his way to the solution, through a gay charade of characters, but the ideas are not as fresh as of yore, nor the quotations as far-sought.

**Roag's Syndicate.** George Davis. *Chapman and Hall*, 14/-. Group of ex-soldiers band together to smuggle diamonds, with sideline in insurance swindles. Uncomfortable facetious tone at times, but details of insurance ramifications absolutely fascinating. A very easy read.

**The Manchurian Candidate.** Richard Condon. *Michael Joseph*, 16/-. The publisher calls it a novel; really it's an out-and-out, if superior, thriller with a dash of SF. A patrol is kidnapped in Korea; one, long since picked as the perfect tool, is brainwashed by splendid Chinese super-scientist into becoming an unconscious assassin, motivated by seeing the Queen of diamonds; the others into believing that the assassin saved all their lives in heroic action, so that he receives Medal of Honour. Most of the book concerns him moving, with his medal and gun, through the nastier reaches of American power politics. Brilliant nonsense. — PETER DICKINSON

## PRESENT LAUGHTER

TO mention Christmas now seems alarmist, and we apologize. It is simply to remind you that far-flung friends, muttering last dates for posting, are already busy with paper and string and greetings, and that this is the year you swore to send early (last year), and really get in first (at last). So let us send them PUNCH throughout 1961. You'll get in not only first but fifty-three times. No paper, no string. We even send the greetings on your behalf to arrive at Christmas. (But you will have to send us your name and address on the form below together with a remittance to Department ED., PUNCH, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.) Subscription details (including all seasonal numbers plus the extra PUNCH Almanack):

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MY NAME..... MR. MRS. MISS  
(BLOCK LETTERS)

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Please send PUNCH throughout 1961 to the name(s) and address(es) as detailed on attached sheet of paper, preceded by a Greetings Card on my behalf to arrive at Christmas. (The service can be started earlier if desired.)

FOR WOMEN



## The Stenographer-Bird

**M**Y dictionary, which is an old one, lists *secretary* under *secret*; I had to wade through a lot of matters mysterious and confidential before coming to any definition which seemed to be relevant. And then the compilers had a surprise for me. *Secretary*: a piece of furniture with conveniences for writing and for the arrangement of papers. Well, well. "Treats me just like the office desk," we shall be able to cry, with all the authority of the lexicographer behind us. There was another definition, macabre, but equally truthful. . . . *Secretary*: a plumed bird of prey which renders valuable services by killing and eating reptiles.

The myth which clings around the female office worker is, like every legend, a product of masculine minds. We are all (or ought to be) blonde, aged about twenty-three, slimly curvaceous. We dress in the sort of clothes men like, that is to say dark, close-fitting garments, with a touch of white at the throat. We smell nice, talk prettily but infrequently, walk very upright. We smile a lot but never laugh. Haughty to strangers, cool and disdainful to other members of the staff, we are unfailingly, charmingly, subservient to our master. Ideally we have a clairvoyance which anticipates, without ever forestalling, his lightest thought. We have no interest in life outside the office; we love our work every whit as much as we love our boss. It goes without saying—without even thinking—that we are flawlessly efficient.

This, then, is the prototype. But if men create myths, women propagate them. We can't always be wearing tight old black; if the pattern were dark enough, why not a full-skirted, off-shoulder floral print? And lavender talc's all very well for the elderly—what about a touch of Paris perfume once in a while? It isn't reasonable for a rounded blonde to be without boy friends. Any chance of getting one or

two of 'em in the office? Let's have a good laugh! Oh, all right, if you really want me to love my work . . . one can always marry one's boss . . . you married already? Then how's about a gay divorce? The myth breaks into a myriad painful pieces; in our darkest commercial caverns men raise exhausted eyes from their brimming in-trays to see it hovering in the sky, golden and careless in the sunlight, a phoenix sprung from their own dead ashes, half bird of paradise, half bird of prey.

We can only talk like this about secretaries because they are all but extinct. Already in the long, long Situations Vacant columns the clever chaps are advertising for Personal Assistants, with some shorthand-typing pleaded for in the smallest possible print. Career possibilities are offered endlessly, opportunities for a gay social life, delightful young companionship, easy travel, good food when you get there. The work is mentioned as seldom as the salary, though the latter is often hinted at as being exceptional. A few firms (those with public relations experts?) use the subtle approach: "Someone really attractive wanted": "You will be treated with the consideration you deserve": "The girl who wins this job will be better dressed, as well as more intelligent, than her competitors." But it is in the small advertisements that one finds the heart-break along with the hysteria. There are the pompously worded ones, the severe which haven't a hope, the frankly dull, the mean. These appear week after week. There are the ones with gimmicks, like the fellow who said "A keen young person with a motor-bike would be just the job." A certain illiteracy creeps in (no wonder they ask for good spellers). One chap wanted someone caperble; another requested the services of a young lady, pleasant work, hours 2.30 a.m. to 4. There is the *cri de cœur*, the man who says please—this would be

the employer for my money. The letters SOS appear not infrequently; but I don't suppose that the director who drafted: Sec.sht.typ.urgent, got a single reply. He didn't deserve one.

Time was when far-sighted employers, seeing the coming predicament, married the girl. But they weren't far-sighted enough; this was realized, too late, to be not the solution. Secretaries get into marriage to get out of the office; if after several years of domesticity they decide to return to commerce, they will almost invariably opt to work for someone else. These poor employers risk finding themselves robbed of consortium in, so to speak, both bedroom and board-room.

Where is it all to end? Every day more office blocks raise tiers of empty windows into the pitiless sky above our cities. Bird boxes, hen batteries, they are called; but is there a prophetic note of anguish behind the derision? For where shall we find the bright little birds to sit in all those nests? Will anything more than legend ever people those miles of corridor with gay, plumed creatures, chattering like parakeets as they kill and eat their reptilian prey? I heard the other day of a woman who, wanting a job, inserted an appealing little advertisement in the personal column of a great national newspaper. I cannot give you the exact wording but I know she hinted at a sympathetic tolerance of muddle, a personal love of order, a discreet wardrobe, an interest in the arts, a liking for good food and wine. She also mentioned that she could type. The secretary she hired to deal with the replies turned out to be a retired colonel, working for the fun of it. They will live very comfortably on his pension and the proceeds of the secretarial agency they plan to start when they return from their honeymoon.

—BERYL SEATON

## Headline

**I** HAVE a dozen hats at least; A floral arch; a fruity feast; A furry fez; a fluffy pail; A strip of straw beneath a veil; Concoctions comic and absurd; A standing plume; a sitting bird; A floppy brim; a flighty bow; A clover cloche; a woollen "O." And each does something to improve The way I look or feel or move While I am searching for the hat Which will do even more than that.

—HAZEL TOWNSON

## My Other Piano

"WE'VE been looking for a piano for months," I said to a friend. "I do want to get a head start on the children and I've left it rather late already," looking at my napkin-wrung hands.

"I know someone who has one to give away," she replied. In a moment I imagined myself dashing off an Etude of Chopin in the warm summer light from open french windows.

"Oh no she hasn't," piped her small daughter. "They've broken it up now and it's a Wendy House in the garden."

Two days later my friend telephoned. "Someone near here has a piano to give away, but you'll have to find your own transport. All the notes seem to work; of course I don't know much about pianos but the rest of the furniture in the house looks all right."

She added that the owner had said first come, first served, and there was no time to waste, so all that morning I telephoned, checking comparative prices among the removers who would even consider moving a piano. They were all very expensive with clauses against stairs or long front drives. Two transport firms claimed to have pianos to give away every day of the week—"Well, not to-day, but if you like to wait till Thursday . . . lovely one coming in . . ." We thought it better to stick to the bird almost in the hand.

It arrived the next day. "Piano?" said the delivery man. "It's a heavy little devil . . . went straight through the floor of our van." They staggered out with it and we had our first glimpse of our exciting bargain. It was monolithic, square, solid oak in a nostalgic school-desk colour. Later we found it bore the insignia of the Educational Supply Association.

"Where do you want it?" they asked. "In the children's playroom," I said hastily.

"Hope it has a good strong floor," they joked.

It hadn't, but neither had the living room and it was too late for such considerations. As they laid hands on it, it quivered and rang. They installed it groaningly, I wrote out a cheque—they sportingly took the damaged floor as one of the risks of the trade—and the chief delivery man struck a bone-shaking chord.

"Lovely tone," he said three minutes later when the echoes had died away.

"Do you play?" I asked, anxious for free advice, consolation and support.

"No," he admitted.

No one in the house plays anything more ambitious than the recorder, but after an afternoon of thumping, five-finger exercise and a one-fingered *Au Clair de la Lune* several notes went out of commission.

The next day we summoned a tuner from the expensive piano and harpsichord shop down the road. We heard him jangling, gasping, and coughing and imagined we saw dust filtering beneath the door.

Finally he came out with a reverent look.

"A real old one, that," he said.

"Well?"

"Well, it's a factory job if you want to have anything done, but frankly . . ."

"How much?" I said. "Five pounds? Ten?"

"Thirty or forty," he said sadly. "And between ourselves we can't put back the clock, can we?"

I asked if he could just tune the notes which *did* sound.

"Not with all that overtone, I couldn't," he replied, going off into technicalities. So that was what that eerie, roaring, singing noise had been—like Valkyries on Egdon Heath.

"Well, could you just make all the Cs play?"

"We don't do that kind of repair." Thinking of the poised elegance of the harpsichords and the Beethoven busts in the showroom I should have guessed that they didn't.

"I'm sorry for your trouble," I said, sorry enough for my own.

"Now if ever you want a piano . . ." he started.

That night my husband filched bits and pieces from the top notes and now all the Cs sound, though with a fierce, snarling after-tone which is disconcerting. The sustaining pedal is permanently on, which is, I understand, the way some people play anyway. We removed the loops of string from the inside and finally removed a piece of wood completely without making any noticeable difference in tone or performance.

We are looking at advertisements again. Meantime our "other" piano shares our lives. It sings with us however far away we are, it vibrates at our every step and groans and whines when we slam doors. I play it. I am well into "Home Love" in the piano tutor. It booms amiably against "Home Sweet Home" and thunders martially through the "Soldiers' March." But it has illusions of grandeur and will certainly never do for Chopin. With its organ notes it lacks the necessary romance and sensibility, besides being out of tune.

The piano makers are advertising "A New Piano is for Life." So, I fear, is ours.

—SHELAGH VOUILLEMIN



### Beauty Hint

"Or if your face conflicts with the flower-pot idea twist it into a knot at the back and wear one of those delicious satin or velvet pillboxes."—*Evening Standard*



"I've told you before—I won't have death-ray guns in this house."





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